

Stone with Woodford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115625
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326236
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Mary Harlow HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	86
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Joyce
Headteacher	Kim McCallmont
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Stone Berkeley GL13 9JX
Telephone number	01454 260309
Fax number	01454 260309

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Stone with Woodford CofE Primary School is smaller than the average size primary school. The pupils come from an extensive rural area surrounding the village of Stone. Most are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural problems. The school has received the International School, Healthy School and Health 4 Schools Awards, together with accreditation for Investors in People, Artsmark Gold and Activemark. It was also the European Link School of the Year in 2007.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'This is a wonderful school! My child is educated at all levels and the school really cares for the whole child.' 'Both my children have thrived and achieved beyond expectations at Stone.' These comments reflect the views of most parents which are overwhelmingly positive. And they are right! Stone with Woodford is an outstanding school; it is indeed a harmonious place where the quality of education and care is of a high calibre. All at this small community are working exceptionally hard to do the best for the pupils. As a result, pupils flourish and their personal development is outstanding.

Achievement across the school is good. The children get off to a promising start in Reception where all make at least good progress because of energetic teaching and meticulous care. This good progress continues across Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils attain above average standards in all subjects by the time they leave. More pupils reach the higher levels in English than in mathematics and science where the more able do not always achieve their full potential. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well because of the first-rate attention they receive.

Relationships between the adults and the children are admirable. This ensures exemplary behaviour. Teaching is consistently good; on occasions, it is inspirational. Consequently, the pupils respond enthusiastically, concentrate well and work hard. The curriculum is a special jewel in the school's crown. Every effort is made to provide the children with practical, motivating experiences that stimulate their thirst for learning. Excellent links are made between subject areas; the international learning adds an impressive dimension. For a small school, there is a remarkable range of visits and clubs on offer which the pupils, parents and carers appreciate.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher cares passionately for the children's education and supports their families well. All adults are signed up to her commendable vision for the school. Moreover, they strive relentlessly to achieve it. One expressed this touchingly, 'We are here for the pupils; to do the best for them. The pupils are rounded because we try to let them access everything they need.' And they are. And they do. Everyone is valued and supported to achieve their best irrespective of their social, faith or ethnic group.

The school knows itself well and sets the right targets to make it even better. It does much to promote community cohesion and works very effectively with other local schools, the parish council, the church and the play group. Governance is robust. Partnership work, including through global links is extensive. The school has made good progress since the last inspection; it has excellent capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children have a good beginning to school life and learn with enjoyment. This is because teaching is lively, relationships are excellent and care is exceptional. Although most arrive with the skills typically expected for their age, this picture changes considerably with every intake. In recent years, a significant minority of children have started school with underdeveloped language and social skills. Nonetheless, an appropriate balance of whole-class, group and individual activities, coupled with a strong emphasis on developing the children's basic skills, ensures that they make good progress in all areas of learning. Most reach broadly average standards by the end of the Reception Year, although a few still need a little extra time to develop their language

skills and overcome behaviour difficulties. The children are confident to write simple sentences independently demonstrating clear letter formation and basic punctuation. They listen attentively to stories, play well together and move around the classroom fully aware of the daily routines. Activities are interesting and fun, for example hunting for words hidden in the outdoor classroom and building shelters for the Gruffalo's friends. Such practical experiences whet the children's appetite for learning. They respond enthusiastically and concentrate well. That said, opportunities are missed to extend the children's vocabulary during independent play and group work. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong and dedicated. The children's progress is monitored assiduously and record keeping is comprehensive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of more able pupils across the school, especially in mathematics and science, and also in reading and writing at Key Stage 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Year 2 have been below the national average for several years, reflecting the proportion of pupils who have language and behavioural difficulties. Nevertheless, inspection evidence shows that standards are rising and pupils are making good progress. Pupil assessment data indicate that standards are now above the national average overall, although, not as yet, at the higher levels. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 due to consistently good and often outstanding teaching. Standards are above the national average and have been consistently so for many years, especially in English. The quality of the older pupils' writing observed during the inspection was outstanding. Standards in art, as evidenced in wonderful displays such as 'Giacometti sculptures', 'Evacuee Clay Bust models' and 'Watercolours of Slimbridge' are above those found nationally due to talented provision. The skilled teaching assistants make a significant contribution to language intervention programmes such as 'Letters and Sounds' and 'Dancing Bears' and to the outstanding progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The extraordinary commitment exhibited by all the adults to the development of the whole child results in pupils thriving and believing that they can achieve. Without exception, children enjoy school and feel their voice is heard. All are refreshingly open in conversation, showing a highly developed sense of respect and care for others. This is particularly noticeable in the manner new children are welcomed into school; they are included immediately. Several parents said, 'I cannot believe how well my child (or children) have settled, the progress they have made since joining and the way the school has welcomed us.' Attendance is consistently good, as is punctuality.

Because the school places a high importance on developing the pupils' self-esteem, and it does so splendidly, pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is excellent. Pupils benefit from a wealth of opportunities designed to cultivate these aspects. Notable examples include: 'Open the Book' assemblies by members of the community who bring Bible stories to life, participation in 'Mock Trials' at a local court, singing regularly to senior citizens, involvement in a range of global projects including visits abroad and regular exhibits of art work. Behaviour is exemplary. The pupils move calmly in class and cooperate well in group tasks; the older ones

exceptionally so. Pupils greet visitors with friendly smiles and chat to them with infectious enthusiasm about what they are learning. They are proud to read their poems and stories to them; and they do so with great aplomb. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the importance of eating healthily and participating in exercise. They feel very safe in school and know there is an adult to turn to if in need. Play and lunchtimes are harmonious occasions. Pupils are developing good basic skills that prepare them for the next school and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are planned conscientiously with clear learning objectives. Every effort is made to exploit relevant cross-curricular links which makes learning interesting. As a consequence, pupils develop good attitudes to learning; some older pupils display excellent levels of motivation and application.

In the best lessons, pupils are given imaginative experiences to bring learning alive. Notable examples observed were stimulating problem solving activities related to science and technology work on forces. Pretending to be shipwrecked off an island, pupils were challenged to make stable rafts from twigs to transport 50 grams of equipment, separate sand and salt to get fresh water, and design parachutes from tissue paper and paper clips to land in a designated area. Others included a visit by pupils to a 'dangerous', derelict cottage nearby the school which was planted with pre-recorded spooky sounds to spark their sense of mystery, excitement and fear for subsequent suspense writing, and Van Gogh's painting; 'Starry Starry Night', was used imaginatively as a stimulus for evocative poetry writing. These experiences captivated the pupils' interest and inspired them to learn and progress at a swift pace. Where teaching is less effective, more able pupils are not always challenged and supported to achieve their full potential. On a few occasions there are not enough opportunities for the younger pupils to plan their learning, talk in pairs and small groups, and use information, communication and technology on a regular basis. Marking and assessment are rigorous.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is stimulating and interests the pupils. The excellent discrete teaching of key skills, including information and communication technology for the older pupils, coupled with the school's commitment to ensure basic literacy and numeracy skills are developed through thoughtful topics prepares pupils extremely well for their next school and for living in the modern world. Visits to bring learning alive and the regular use of professional artists and sports specialists, for example for animation and kick boxing, provide excellent enrichment to the curriculum. Specialist teaching in art, French, German and music ensures pupils achieve well in these subjects. The international dimension to the curriculum is outstanding; all learning is meticulously integrated into the planning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Adults are exceptionally committed to the care and welfare of the pupils. This contributes significantly to the pupils' enjoyment of school. Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are in place, including those relating to child protection. Pupils appreciate the regular workshops

on internet safety and careful use of mobile phones. They are also acutely aware of the parking arrangements and road safety routines. There are good links with outside agencies to ensure that pupils' social and emotional needs are met. Academic guidance is strong. Tracking systems to check the pupils' progress are rigorous and teachers are held accountable appropriately to ensure pupils meet their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Highly committed and exacting leadership by the headteacher, ably supported by a dedicated staff team and governing body, is ensuring that the school is moving forward at a swift pace. All are focused relentlessly on further improvement. Discussions are refreshingly honest and leaders, including governors, have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The delegation of leadership is strong and all adults are competent leaders of learning. Staff and governors receive excellent professional support; as a result, there is an infectious team spirit permeating throughout the school. All subject leaders and governors are closely involved in monitoring the school's work, which they do rigorously and with tremendous enthusiasm. Documentation is impressive and the evaluation of the school's work is honest. Exceptionally good use is made of governors' professional knowledge and expertise to evaluate the work of the school. They hold it to account in a challenging but supportive manner.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Stone with Woodford Church of England Primary School, Stone, GL13 9JX

I am writing to say thank you for giving me such a warm welcome during my recent visit to your school. I was impressed with the way you greeted me so confidently with friendly smiles. I enjoyed talking with you about your work, hearing your poems and suspense stories, and watching you participate in 'Wake and Shake' and circuit training so enthusiastically. Your school is outstanding in many ways. Here are some of the special things that it does very well indeed.

- Your school looks after you exceptionally well and the adults want to do their best for you.
- Your behaviour is exemplary and everyone in the school cares for each other. You play so well and safely together despite the small space available.
- You make good progress in all year groups and achieve good standards by the time you leave, especially in English.
- You achieve well in music and sports; your art work is superb!
- Your teachers plan interesting activities for you which help you to enjoy school.
- The school council take their responsibilities seriously and help to organise many fund raising events.
- There are lots of clubs and visits, which you enjoy; your contributions to local and global communities are terrific for such a small school.
- Your headteacher and other adults are always looking for ways to make your school an even better place to be. They value your views and those of your parents and carers in helping them to do this.

You have such a wonderful headteacher, fantastic adults and committed governors at your school. I have asked them to make sure you achieve even higher standards in your work. It was a real privilege to visit Stone with Woodford Church of England Primary School. Keep up the great work and, most importantly, continue to enjoy your learning.

Best wishes for the future; I hope you achieve great things!

Yours sincerely

Mary Harlow

Her Majesty's Inspector