

# Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123802
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	327992
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Morris

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.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	70
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Adrian Stables
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Berks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Stoke St Gregory Taunton TA3 6EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 490437
<b>Fax number</b>	01823 490145

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	327992

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a very small village school. Almost all pupils are White British. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly speech and language difficulties, is smaller than in most schools. The school has recently federated with another local school. The two schools have the same headteacher and governing body. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from the age of four. They share their classroom with older pupils in Years 1 and 2.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Stoke St Gregory's is a good school. The strong and caring Christian ethos is at the heart of the school's success. It contributes strongly to pupils' exemplary behaviour and attitudes and to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has the overwhelming support of parents, as shown by the high number of questionnaire returns with very positive comments praising the work of the school. 'I feel very lucky that my child is able to attend this school' is a typical comment. 'I am hugely impressed by Stoke St Gregory school. My child has grown in confidence since moving there. A lovely school,' commented another parent.

An important reason for the good improvement since the last inspection is the good quality of leadership and management by the headteacher, who provides clear vision and direction. Her strong focus on pupils attaining high standards both academically and personally has promoted a positive ethos in which pupils feel valued. This encourages them to develop effective relationships with their peers and with adults. Other leaders support the headteacher well and together, they form a strong team with a clear, shared vision. Recent federation with another local school has added impetus to the improvements, and has promoted wider friendships and increased curriculum and learning opportunities for pupils and staff.

Children typically start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are as expected for their age. They progress well because of good teaching and support. Provision for them is good but is sometimes restricted by the outdoor area which limits their opportunities to work and play outdoors in all weathers. Pupils across the school achieve well and make good progress during their time at the school so that they attain above average standards by the time they leave in Year 6. Standards have risen since the last inspection. A small number of pupils in Years 1 and 2, particularly those of higher ability, do not always achieve their potential because expectations of what they can do are not always high enough.

Teaching is good across the school with some outstanding teaching in Years 5 and 6 that helps pupils to accelerate their progress. Teachers plan many exciting activities for all pupils. The rich curriculum provides pupils with extensive opportunities to develop their personal skills and improve their understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. The many additional activities, such as clubs and visits that enrich and extend learning, are highly valued by pupils. Older pupils talk excitedly, for example, about a recent residential visit to London with their partner school. The school provides good quality care for all pupils. Child protection procedures and systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety are rigorous and any potential risks are assessed carefully. The school has improved its assessment procedures recently. Academic and personal progress is carefully tracked and a clear picture of each pupil's achievements is now developing.

Governors are supportive and regularly challenge leadership about its decisions. They have been instrumental in extending the building through effective budget management and are working closely with the headteacher to embed the new federation. The school has a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enjoy school and quickly settle in the Reception class because of good teaching and support. They benefit from sharing their classroom with older pupils in Years 1 and 2, which helps them to develop friendships. Children's attainment on entry varies because of the very small numbers in each year group but they achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Activities in the classroom are successfully linked to their ages and abilities so that they eagerly look forward to playing, for example in the class 'surgery'. Children's personal development and well-being are good. However, their independence is sometimes limited because they are unable to make choices about where they want to work and play. This is partly due to the fabric of the Victorian building but is also because there is no provision for outdoor play in wet weather. Children regularly have someone to talk to and they are encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts at every opportunity. Leaders have a clear view of how well children are progressing because their achievements are regularly measured. Links with parents are strong. 'Our child is happy in the caring environment and we are very pleased that we chose this school,' wrote a parent. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that higher attaining pupils achieve their full potential, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children have more choice about where they want to work and play.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school. In the 2008 assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils attained broadly average standards. Most pupils achieved well from their starting points, although too few attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils exceeded their expected targets and over half of all pupils attained the higher levels in all three subjects. Achievement accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because of some outstanding provision that helps pupils to be fully aware of how to improve their work. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well as a result of the good support provided in lessons. Pupils across the school make good progress in art and music because of specialist teaching in these areas.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. As a result, their attendance is above average. The high emphasis placed on developing relationships and friendships means that the school is a harmonious place in which pupils thrive. They develop a very clear understanding of multicultural issues through a range of visits and through their study of different cultures in places such as Uganda and India. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum ensures that pupils have very positive attitudes and that behaviour is exemplary in and around the school. Pupils are keen to take on simple responsibilities and regularly help by doing little jobs. Older pupils act as play leaders at break and lunchtimes helping those who are younger or who have no one to play with. Pupils have clear views about how the school could be improved but do not always

have the opportunity to have a voice, such as through a school council. Pupils are actively involved in the local village community and with the church. For example, they have planted bulbs on the local playing field and regularly take part in the local 'egg-shackling' custom as part of their preparation for Lent. They regularly take part in local concerts and recently joined in with a local pantomime production in the village hall. Pupils display good understanding of healthy lifestyles and the importance of keeping fit. They say that they feel safe at school and that there is no bullying. Their outstanding personal development and good progress in academic skills prepares them very well for their futures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Strong relationships are a key feature of almost all lessons, resulting in good behaviour and high levels of mutual respect. Lessons are typically well organised to meet the needs of all the different groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and play a positive role in supporting all pupils and particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Questioning is a key feature of most lessons, encouraging pupils to think for themselves. An example of this was seen in Years 1 and 2 where the teacher extended pupils' understanding of two-dimensional shapes by asking questions about the number of sides and the similarities and differences of each shape. Just occasionally, there are a few missed opportunities to extend learning and challenge pupils by asking relevant questions. At these times, a few pupils, particularly those of higher attainment, do not achieve quite as well as they might. Very skilled teaching for the oldest pupils results in some excellent progress in these classes. This was evident in a session where pupils were grading a piece of work using a marking grid. The very strong focus on improving punctuation, vocabulary and sentence structure resulted in pupils developing excellent awareness of how to improve their own work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has improved recently through the development of good links across many subjects, which makes learning interesting. For example, literacy skills are regularly developed through history or geography and numeracy skills are used very effectively to help pupils achieve high standards in science. There are particular strengths in provision for art and music, resulting in pupils doing well in local arts festivals and competitions and regularly performing for the wider community. The school provides extensive after-school activities, including sports and trips with their federation partner. The highly valued trip to London recently by pupils in Years 5 and 6 from both schools helped to cement friendships between the schools and extend pupils' knowledge of wider Britain. The outdoor curriculum for children in the Reception class is more limited and does not always extend their skills well enough.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are cared for extremely well in the safe and supportive environment that the school provides. Parents are confident that staff look after their children well. Pupils themselves feel that they are listened to. Safeguarding procedures are very good. Effective systems to track pupils' achievements have improved and are beginning to show how well each pupil is doing.

This is helping the school to set clear and accurate targets for improvement and is having a positive impact on raising standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Older pupils have an excellent understanding of their own targets and how to improve their work. Younger pupils, however, do not always know their targets or how they could do better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders are successful in creating an ethos in which pupils thrive and have a clear vision for the future of the school. Along with the good support provided by governors and other leaders, the headteacher has tackled the challenge of federation, particularly the joint leadership of the two schools, with enthusiasm. As a result, there has been good improvement in standards, achievement and accommodation since the last inspection. The school building has been extensively refurbished and extended, providing a creative and spacious learning environment for most pupils. The school uses challenging targets well to improve all aspects of the school. A good start has been made in developing a strategy for community cohesion resulting in close links both locally and in the wider world. Because of effective self-evaluation and regular monitoring, leaders are well aware that there is more to do to improve outdoor provision for the youngest children in the Reception class and to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve their full potential.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

<sup>1</sup>Grade 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

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

18 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoke St Gregory CofE Primary School, Taunton TA3 6EG

Thank you for your help in our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about some of the things you do at school. I particularly enjoyed having lunch with a few of you and I noticed that you made some healthy choices. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found out about your school.

Yours is a good school and most of you achieve well in your lessons. This is because teachers plan some exciting things for you to do and teaching assistants give you good support. Most of you achieve well in your lessons although a few of you in Years 1 and 2 may be able to do even better. You told us lots of things about the visits you go on and the clubs that you enjoy. You behave very well and are kind and helpful to each other. We were pleased to see how some of the older pupils help the younger ones, especially in the playground. You told us that there is no bullying at the school and that teachers quickly sort out any problems.

The youngest children in the Reception class have lots of fun at school and make good progress. They behave well and enjoy school. Their outdoor play area needs a few improvements so that they can use it in all weathers.

Leaders look after you well and regularly keep track of how well you are doing. We are asking them to do two things to make your school even better:

- Make sure that you all achieve as well as you can, particularly if you have lots of ability. You can help with this by working even harder.
- Improve the outdoor learning area for children in Reception.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours faithfully

Denise Morris

Lead Inspector