

Little Stoke Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131699
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	341198
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Joy Harrison
Headteacher	Dr Angela Greenwood
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Three quarters of the time in school was spent observing learning. The inspectors visited 13 lessons taught by seven teachers. They joined an assembly, observed break times, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 71 pupils' questionnaires, nine staff questionnaires, 54 parents' and carers' questionnaires, and undertook a case study of several pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable.

They looked in detail at the following:

the progress made by girls in writing at Key Stage 1

learning and progress at Key Stage 2, especially in writing

the quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress in all subjects

the effectiveness of improvement planning to accelerate progress and secure consistently high attainment.

Information about the school

Little Stoke primary school is smaller than average. Nearly all pupils come from White British families. A small number of pupils come from German and Polish families and some of them do not speak English at home as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in a discrete Reception class. The school has recently gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools and Silver Eco status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Little Stoke provides a satisfactory quality of education within a very safe, welcoming and caring atmosphere. Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of education that the school provides. One parent wrote, 'I feel very lucky to have my child at such a happy school.' Another wrote, 'We have a very positive relationship with teachers and have always found them very approachable.'

Children get off to a good start in the Reception, where they progress well in all the areas of learning because teaching is good. Progress in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory and attainment, by the time pupils move to secondary school, is average. Since the last inspection, the school has sustained pupils' good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in science. The school has experienced some staffing difficulties recently during which progress in writing at Key Stage 2 slowed. Now that staffing is more stable, the school has successfully tackled this problem through effective improvement plans. Progress in writing is now accelerating and pupils are quickly catching up on missed work. This leadership record, together with its accurate self-evaluation, shows the school's satisfactory capacity for continued improvement.

Most aspects of pupils' personal development are good. They feel very safe in school and do their best to keep healthy. Pupils behave well. They have positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy school. However, pupils' attendance is average because some of them miss too many days when some parents and carers take them on holidays during term time. The school's progress data show that these pupils often make slower progress than those who attend regularly.

There are positive aspects to teaching, although it is satisfactory overall. Class management is good, relationships are very positive and pupils are keen to learn. However, teaching does not always sustain a good level of challenge throughout lessons to ensure that pupils are always working hard. Usually, this is because work does not match precisely the needs of each pupil. In such cases, some pupils find activities too easy and coast while others struggle to make good progress because they find the work too hard. This is especially so at Key Stage 2 when teachers do not use the data they have on each pupil's progress consistently well to plan challenging next steps in their learning in writing and mathematics. Pupils now understand clearly what they need to do to improve their work. The curriculum, while satisfactory, has some positive aspects such as music. Adults know pupils, including those who are vulnerable, well and use this knowledge skilfully to provide them with a good standard of care, guidance and support. The staff enthusiastically share the headteacher's clearly articulated drive to improve the school. While leaders monitor the quality of teaching robustly, they do not collect and

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check frequently enough the data on each pupil's performance. This means that leaders cannot spot and rectify quickly any slowing of progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching to secure good progress by:
 - matching work closely to pupils' needs and abilities so that they are challenged well throughout lessons
 - making better use of progress data for writing and mathematics to plan challenging work at Key Stage 2.
- Gather and check progress data more frequently so that leaders can quickly identify and remedy any slowing of progress.
- Reduce the number of family holidays taken in term time to raise the attendance rate and so secure better progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The learning observed in lessons was satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6 and good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good learning was seen in a lesson where pupils were developing their ideas to include in a fairy story. They excitedly acted out a story they knew, which helped them identify adjectives that could be used to make their stories interesting. They worked hard in pairs inventing a character, discussing its appearance and personality. They listened attentively to the teacher and each other's ideas, which helped them immensely in their planning for writing the story. In a less effective mathematics lesson, pupils enjoyed the lively introduction and were keen to make a start on multiplication and subtraction exercises. Many pupils worked hard on their calculations and enjoyed getting the correct answers. However, one quarter of the class found learning difficult and unrewarding because the work was too hard for them and they did not get help from the teacher quickly enough.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy learning and their achievement is satisfactory. Girls' progress in writing at Key stage 1, which was slower than the boys' last year, has accelerated because teachers give them more opportunity to talk about and organise their ideas before they write. This has raised girls' confidence and the standard of their written work.

The rare cases of bullying are quickly resolved. Pupils understand well how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. They eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise both in and out of school, recognised in the school's national award. Pupils' efforts to improve the environment, for example by organising recycling points in each classroom and making sure lights are switched off when they are not needed, is reflected in the school's eco award. They are keen to take responsibility as playground helpers and as members of the school council, and collect generously for charity. Attendance in lessons during the inspection was above average and most pupils attend school very regularly. However, over the school year, attendance is only average. This,

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together with pupils’ positive attitudes towards their work, and an average grasp of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, means their preparation for secondary school and future work is satisfactory.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. They reflect maturely on their feelings and those of others. A strong moral code underpins pupils’ good behaviour. Occasionally, they lose concentration and fidget if they find their work too hard or easy. Pupils work together well in teams and readily help each other. While pupils respect others from backgrounds different to their own, their understanding of the diversity of British culture is a relative weakness.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use computers and other resources well to make work interesting and develop learning. This is helping to sustain good progress in science. However, teaching does not always challenge pupils sufficiently to sustain good progress in writing and mathematics lessons. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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speak German or Polish at home.

The curriculum supports aspects of pupils’ personal development well. For example, in a science lesson seen, pupils made good gains in their understanding of the importance of vitamins in their diet. Good opportunities to sing and play musical instruments raise aspirations and add to pupils’ enjoyment of school. The school has recently introduced appropriate measures to improve pupils’ sentence construction and their use of vocabulary when they write. These measures are helping to improve progress but it is too early to judge if this will lead to good progress in writing. Pupils enjoy the many well-attended clubs and visits out of school, which also broaden their horizons.

Pupils confidently turn to an adult with a worry, knowing that their concerns will be quickly resolved. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sensitive support. The accurate assessments of the needs of pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language provides them with good guidance so that they quickly integrate into the life of the school. The school’s targeted support for its small number of vulnerable pupils is effective. For example, a pupil who transferred to Little Stoke five terms ago with a poor attendance record and little confidence, told an inspector that the good support she gets from adults means that she enjoys school, has plenty of friends, attends regularly and is doing well with her work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders’ ambitious targets and their drive to make the school better are articulated clearly to staff. The governors work hard on behalf of the school and their growing understanding of data means that they are starting to challenge the school robustly over its performance. Teachers regularly assess pupils’ standards but leaders do not collect this data frequently enough, which means they are sometimes slow to intervene if progress is less than expected. Leaders have provided training that has sharpened teachers’ lesson planning to provide more time for discussion of ideas before writing. This is helping to improve progress in this subject.

The school places a high priority on safety and safeguarding. Child protection procedures are robust, regularly updated and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with children and pupils are rigorous. The school is thoroughly committed to promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination. There are areas in which the policies show

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signs of success, for example the success of the school’s action to tackle some previous gender inequalities. However, the current overall progress of pupils shows the promotion of equality to be satisfactory rather than good.

The school has evaluated its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context thoroughly, and the contribution it makes to community cohesion is satisfactory. The work it has undertaken in helping families to support their child’s education at home is having a positive impact in school, which is a happy and harmonious community. The school is planning links with local schools with diverse ethnic intakes to improve pupils’ insight into communities that are different to their own.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Boys and girls make similarly good progress in Reception. Most enter the school with levels below those expected for their age and reach average levels by the time they start Year 1. Children’s personal development is good. For example, they behave very well, readily share equipment and are polite to each other and to adults. Parents and carers are very pleased with the way they are kept informed about their child’s progress and the guidance they are given as to how they can help their child learn at home. Children are very safe in the indoor classroom and outside learning area.

Learning is good. For example, children were thoroughly engrossed in learning about the skeleton and finding out the names of bones. Teachers plan an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Occasionally, learning slows when adults do not push children on to the next stage of their learning quickly enough in activities children

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choose. While the outdoor area is used well to promote children’s gaining of independence and physical development, it is not as well resourced as indoors to develop some other aspects of learning such as reading and calculating.

Detailed assessments of each child’s progress are used well to plan their learning. Training is quickly improving the Early Years Foundation Stage teaching skills of adults working in the setting. These features are typical of the good leadership of the setting.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About two fifths of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. Many added positive comments about how much their children enjoyed school and the good care the school provides. A few said that they have concerns about the way the school meets the particular needs of their child. Inspectors found that the care and support for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who do not speak English at home as their first language, is good. However, inspectors found that teaching does not consistently stretch pupils of different abilities so that they make good progress. A few parents and carers feel that the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspectors found behaviour management to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Stoke Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	54	23	43	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	32	59	22	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	52	24	44	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	56	21	39	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	52	25	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	52	23	43	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	50	24	44	3	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	44	23	43	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	50	22	41	3	6	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	57	16	30	3	6	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	43	25	46	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	20	19	35	1	2	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	57	19	35	1	2	3	6

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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29 February 2010

Dear Pupils Inspection of Little Stoke Primary School, Bristol, BS34 6HY

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed sharing your successes in assembly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. Little Stoke is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things we found out.

- Your teachers ensure that you get off to a good start in Reception.
- You enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You try your very best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise.
- Your behaviour is good.

You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.

- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school get better. We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning:
 - make sure teachers provide work for you that is neither too hard nor too easy so you make better progress
 - make sure those in charge check your learning more frequently so that they can help you quickly if your progress slows
 - improve the attendance of those of you who do not attend well enough so that you make better progress.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons and behaving well.

I wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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