

Stoke Row Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123136
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292591
Inspection dates	17–18 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Vanessa Potter
Headteacher	Mr Steven McTegart
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001
School address	Stoke Row Henley-on-Thames RG9 5QS
Telephone number	01491 680720
Fax number	01491 680019

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Stoke Row is a very small village primary school located in an advantaged area. Most pupils come from white British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below average. The school admits four-year-old children to its Reception class each September. They start part-time for two of the six terms in the school year and then full-time for the rest of the year. The other three classes in the school are of mixed-age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Stoke Row is a good school with some outstanding features. Staff and governors are very committed to promoting the pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils enjoy school very much. They are extremely well behaved and relationships are excellent. Many take an active role as school councillors representing the views of other pupils or interviewing for new staff. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is passionate about, 'Widening horizons for pupils'. He has successfully established a school whose aims include the development of pupils 'so that they may grow to be active, responsible and confident adults'. Governors are a real asset and are extremely involved in the school. Together with the headteacher they have secured very good improvements since the last inspection. Parents think highly of the school, one summing up the views of most, 'We have always found all of the members of staff easy to approach'. There are strong partnerships with parents, the neighbouring church and other schools, so that pupils develop excellent attitudes towards the local and wider community. The school barbeque is one of many social occasions that bring the community together and pupils in Years 1 and 2 even suggested selling their autobiographies to raise money for charity.

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards. There is excellent provision in the Foundation Stage. A stimulating range of activities enable Reception children to make rapid progress and exceed the learning goals expected of five-year-olds. They have the confidence to write exciting stories and skilfully read these to children from a local nursery. In Years 1 to 6, the teaching is good and standards are rising. Lessons and activities are well planned for mixed-age classes so that most pupils exceed their targets in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress in writing is relatively slower because they do not always have enough opportunities to write at length in all subjects. Teachers make good use of assessment to plan lessons that build on what pupils already know and understand. However, assessment and tracking systems are not sophisticated enough to help the staff check the performance of pupils regularly.

The school is very committed to inclusion which is reflected in the excellent support provided for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. All pupils are extremely well cared for and supported. They receive good guidance in lessons, with many opportunities to assess their own learning. 'We can set our own targets which get added to those that our teacher gives us', says one pupil. Pupils are very aware of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils develop healthy and active lifestyles which are enhanced by the healthy lunches prepared by a local restaurant which uses local produce. The pupils develop a good range of skills that prepare them well for the future. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 designed a business project to present to other pupils using computers. The work done in science and geography helps pupils in Years 3 and 4 to develop a very good understanding of conservation, recycling and caring for the environment.

The school is energetic and forward thinking in seeking to improve facilities. Staff and governors have accurately assessed the school's effectiveness through systematic monitoring and are well placed to continue improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 and provide more opportunities for pupils to write extensively across all subjects.

- Modify assessment and tracking systems to help teachers analyse data about pupils' performance to maximise their progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well in relation to their average starting points. Children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress towards the early learning goals expected of five-year-olds, so that standards in communication, literacy and mathematics are well in advance of those expected for their age. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress in reading, mathematics and science and satisfactory progress in writing. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science, although the pupils make slower progress in writing. Teachers use consistent methods to teach phonics, reading and numeracy skills which accounts for the good progress pupils make in reading and mathematics. Standards are relatively lower in writing because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extensively. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets because of well focused support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a major strength of the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their positive approach to learning, excellent behaviour and attendance are a tribute to all that the staff and community provide. They play together extremely well in the playground and are emphatic that no bullying occurs. Pupils are well prepared for their next stages of learning and are proud of their school. 'I love school, you make lots of friends and we all help each other', is one of many positive comments from pupils. They show initiative and enterprise, for example, when older pupils worked out projected costs for their business plans before presenting them to other pupils. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They collaborate and work in teams and enjoy the many opportunities to reflect on spiritual and moral issues through excellent and well presented assemblies in the church. They are thoughtful and considerate to others, as demonstrated in charity work and through the effective work of the school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and there is outstanding teaching in the Foundation Stage. Teachers manage behaviour very well so that there is a positive learning climate in lessons. Teachers use interactive whiteboards extremely well to ensure that pupils are clear about each stage of learning. Work is thoroughly planned for different year groups in mixed-age classes. However, there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills in all subjects in Years 1 to 6. Support staff are good at helping those with learning difficulties or disabilities so that they make good progress. Teachers plan work conscientiously and provide good visual prompts, texts and resources that help to focus pupils' learning and extend their thinking. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have developed an excellent understanding of number facts because the work provided is challenging and well matched to their abilities. In the Foundation Stage, excellent

use is made of stories and literature, including role-play to help Reception children to quickly develop their reading, writing and communication skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes and it is excellent in the Foundation Stage. The provision for personal and social education is strong and contributes to pupils' outstanding personal development. There is a stimulating programme of lessons, outdoor activities, visits and visitors to the school, and very good opportunities for pupils to take part in music, dance and drama, as well as learning to speak French. Despite the limitations of not having a school hall, the use of a gym at a local school compensates for this and the physical education curriculum is broad enough. This was recognised when the school was awarded the national 'Active Mark'. Other additional activities do much to enhance pupils' enjoyment, health and fitness such as the recent cross-country event which created a carnival atmosphere as runners were cheered on by younger pupils and parents. The school rightly prioritised reading to improve literacy and language skills and this has been very successful. The relative weakness in pupils' writing is now a priority, and a good start has been made as pupils write about an interesting range of topics. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils designed 'Save the Tiger' leaflets, using very good ICT and writing skills, when studying endangered species.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely well cared for and procedures to safeguard them are excellent. Staff and governors are highly effective in ensuring that systematic risk assessments and health and safety checks are carried out efficiently. Parents feel welcome and are confident that the staff will take excellent care of their children. The large majority of parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's work and progress and how they can help. Systems to assess pupils' work are good and information is compiled well but data are difficult to analyse and interpret quickly. Teachers provide excellent opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning with clear targets. Teachers' marking is very helpful to the pupils as improvement points are linked to their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school knows itself well, which is reflected in its accurate self-evaluation. Planning for improvement takes account of the views of pupils, staff and parents. The headteacher makes accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching. Although pupils' performance is monitored by all staff, the analysis of assessment data is not sharp enough to check if all pupils are on course to reach their targets. The outstanding governors hold the school to account extremely well and provide highly effective support. Excellent systems are in place to ensure they monitor the school's performance with the headteacher and staff. Governors and parents contribute greatly to the life of the school, to fund raising and by working on specific projects such as improving resources or refurbishing the school building. The school is proud of its history and heritage, as well as its standing in the local community. It is a traditional school with a modern outlook, which is reflected in the significant

improvements made to ICT facilities and resources since its last inspection. Outdoor areas and equipment have also improved very well and create a positive learning environment. The school's track record of improvement shows that it has good capacity to improve.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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 the learners' needs?	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?	1

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stoke Row Church of England School, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 5QS

I was very pleased to visit your school. You all made me feel really welcome and I really enjoyed those excellent lunches and your company as we shared a meal together.

Yours is a good school and there are some excellent features. You all work very hard with your teachers and I agree with the many parents who say what an enjoyable and happy place your school is. I was very impressed with the efforts of the cross-country runners, well done to you all. It was also pleasing to see so many younger children and parents cheering them; that was great! There are so many good things about your school that it is hard for me to pick out the very best. However, these are just a few:

- you are extremely well behaved, polite and considerate
- your teachers help you to reach good standards, especially in reading, mathematics, science and ICT
- you enjoy learning because there are lots of things to do before and after school
- I was very impressed with the school council and how it helps to improve the school; the councillors have come up with some great ideas and it must be very challenging when they interview new staff
- your parents are very pleased with you and your teachers and the school works very closely with them
- the staff take excellent care of you and make sure you are all safe and happy
- the headteacher, staff and governors manage the school well and work hard to keep looking for ways to make the school even better.

I have asked your teachers to:

- help some of you do even better in writing
- keep checking how well you are all doing to make sure you all reach your targets.

Well done and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector