

# Stoke Prior Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	116736
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	395369
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kathy Hooper

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

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<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	81
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Stoke Prior Leominster HR6 0ND
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<b>Fax number</b>	01568 760207
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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<b>Inspection number</b>	395369



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Three teachers were observed teaching six lessons over a period of three and a quarter hours. Additionally, pupils were observed learning phonics (letters and sounds work) with teachers and their assistants. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The school's policies and monitoring records were examined. The inspector looked at pupils' work, heard them read and analysed the school's data on their progress. Fifty-six questionnaires from parents and carers, 11 from staff and 75 from pupils were analysed.

## Information about the school

This is a very small primary school. Most pupils come from the surrounding areas and the remainder are brought to school by bus. The number of pupils on roll has increased since the previous inspection and a small minority joined the school at times other than the usual starting point. Pupils are predominantly White British, with a small proportion who are of minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes: one class contains Reception children and pupils in Year 1; another has pupils in Years 2 and 3; the other class provides for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. The school has Healthy School status and an Eco School (Silver) award. The school does not reach the current government floor standards for attainment and progress. A new headteacher joined the school in January 2011.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The parents and carers of those pupils joining from other schools report that their children have blossomed. The school is not outstanding because of the outcomes for pupils last year were below average. This was due to some pupils' under-performance not being addressed sufficiently promptly.
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and all groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. The tiny year groups lead to variation, year on year, in outcomes as measured by statutory tests. Although attainment is often above average, last year it dipped to below average.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent. The exceptional ethos of the school promotes pupils' confidence and independence very effectively. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves and others safe. Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Lessons are lively and teachers match work well to individual needs. Occasionally, teachers spend too long explaining to the whole class, which reduces the time available for pupils to learn for themselves, reflect on their learning, and for teachers to address any misconceptions. Pupils do not always have the opportunity to use information and communication technology in lessons to help them learn.
- Since his arrival, the headteacher has introduced close monitoring of pupils' progress and a programme of interventions for under-performing pupils. This helps teachers to plan precisely, and the governing body to hold the school to account. As a result, pupils are now making much better progress. The curriculum ensures a consistent approach to literacy and numeracy. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very well developed and their social development is outstanding. Targets for pupils' progress are clearly addressed through teachers' performance management. However, monitoring focuses

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mainly on teachers' actions rather than the quality of pupils' learning.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all pupils consistently reach their potential in English and mathematics by promptly addressing any under-performance.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
  - extending opportunities in lessons for all pupils to be actively engaged in their own learning
  - allowing more time for pupils to resolve misconceptions and reflect upon their learning
  - ensuring pupils have wider opportunities to use information and communication technology.
- Improve the monitoring of teaching by placing greater emphasis on its impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry to the school is below age-related expectations. Pupils make good progress throughout and younger pupils benefit from learning alongside older ones. Children in Reception are articulate and have good social skills, often working very collaboratively with their peers. They are beginning to write and ask for help when necessary. They persevered extremely well when making boats, attaching 'seats' and 'sails', and testing them in the water to discover whether they floated.

The progress of pupils throughout the school is good and that of some previously under-performing pupils has been greatly accelerated since the arrival of the new headteacher. The attainment of Key Stage 1 pupils is above average, including in reading. Year 1 pupils recognise odd and even numbers and identify patterns in lists of two-digit numbers. Year 2 pupils read confidently, fluently and often with great expression. They enjoy books, explain the story well, and make accurate predictions about events. The school has recovered from the dip in attainment in 2011 and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average, including in reading and mathematics. More able pupils in Year 6 identify key features of the books they have read and have informed opinions on the style and work of different authors. Their writing is accurate and well presented. It engages and sustains the reader's interest well. In mathematics, pupils estimate sensibly and accurately convert metric measurements to imperial.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress

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because of the close attention paid to their specific needs, and the prompt and appropriate support from outside agencies. Those from minority ethnic groups are confident, articulate and successful in their learning. Pupils' good achievement in reading and writing is promoted through a well-focused phonics programme and one-to-one support for those pupils who might otherwise fall behind with their work.

Parents and carers' positive views are summed up in the comment from a parent 'My child is progressing so well under the headteacher and the staff ... He is constantly challenged by his school work (on) which he thrives.'

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers use the school's data on pupils' progress to tailor plans well to their individual needs. They promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills very effectively. They ensure that pupils develop good study skills and learn useful strategies for accurate reading and writing. For example, during the showing of a video about weighing elephants, pupils used their whiteboards to make notes to help them. Pupils are very well engaged by lessons and their enthusiasm for learning is tangible. Most pupils know their targets and how to improve their work. In the best lessons, teachers ask searching questions that prompt good reflection on learning. The mix of ages within each class enables teachers to develop pupils' moral and social skills very effectively through a collaborative approach to learning. At the end of a lesson focusing on descriptive writing about the 'Iron Man', pupils who had not had a chance to read their accounts to the whole class spontaneously read them to their friends while clearing away. Pupils' work is marked frequently and their progress is regularly assessed.

The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well met in lessons. There is excellent communication between all staff about pupils' needs and progress. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and well informed about pupils' targets and question those they are supporting very skilfully. In occasional lessons, while pupils concentrate very well, they listen to the teacher for too long. In those lessons, opportunities are missed to check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions. Although the dedicated computer room is well used, pupils have relatively few opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning in their classrooms.

Pupils say that the teaching is good and that teachers help them to do as well as they can. Parents and carers agree, for instance commenting, 'Her confidence and ability have been down to great teaching at the school.'

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Lessons are characterised by their high levels of application and pupils' focused and controlled discussions about their learning. They are rightly proud of their successes and delight in explaining their work to others. Pupils are skilled in managing their own behaviour and older pupils

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take great care of younger ones, encouraging them to do the 'right thing'. For instance, at lunchtime, a girl encouraged her neighbour to eat up his main course before eating his pudding. Pupils have considerable independence. They work together exceptionally well and readily engage with the activities provided. A higher attaining Year 1 girl ably helped two others to understand how to work out the patterns in lists of numbers. They questioned her explanations before confidently approaching the task set by the teacher.

Pupils have been influential in writing the new behaviour policy. Staff are well trained in behaviour support and there is a consistent approach to the management of behaviour, for example, using the 'sad and sorry chair' or the 'worry box'. Some pupils' special educational needs occasionally make it difficult for them to control their behaviour, but their peers are supportive. Records show significant improvements for pupils with challenging behaviour. Pupils, parents and carers and staff acknowledge great improvements in behaviour since the new headteacher arrived. They report that any occasional unkind behaviour is promptly and sensitively addressed. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, and they are taught how to avoid cyber-bullying. Pupils feel very safe in school and their parents and carers totally agree. Parents and carers comment on the close-knit family ethos within the school, referring to it as 'a wonderfully warm and friendly school'.

### **Leadership and management**

The senior leadership team is firmly focused on raising achievement, and the school development plan reflects this well. While standards year on year are often significantly above average, last year, for the first time, they dipped below average. The leadership of teaching is good. Monitoring has enabled a number of improvements to be implemented over the last year to prevent such dips in the future, including improvements in the phonics programme. Nevertheless, not enough account is taken of the quality of pupils' learning when observing lessons. The school was quick to take action regarding the under-performance of some pupils and systems are being strengthened to promptly address pupils' gaps in learning. Teachers' performance management is now closely linked to pupils' targets. Staff are highly committed and proud to be part of the school. They have good opportunities for professional development and have been well trained, for instance, in the teaching of phonics. They regularly observe good practice in their own and other schools. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Any pupils identified as under-performing have made good and sometimes exceptional progress, particularly in reading, as a result of interventions. Improved monitoring and respect for, and recognition of, individual differences ensure each pupil's needs and circumstances are well known throughout the school.

The curriculum has been enhanced, in consultation with pupils, for example through drama, and involvement in the Forest School initiative. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that are very well attended. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is addressed very well. Pupils are encouraged to

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appreciate differences in people, celebrate the successes of everyone and are taught to ask 'big questions'. For example, Year 1 pupils spontaneously discussed what they thought was the biggest number in the world, while looking for patterns in lists of two-digit figures. As a result of pupils being involved in developing the behaviour policy, they have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' social development is outstanding with everyone playing their part in making life pleasant and enjoyable for all. Pupils are articulate and socially aware. The school has a wind turbine and vegetable garden and is currently measuring the water and electricity with a view to reducing consumption. Pupils' cultural development is powerfully promoted through 'green' links with Spain, Italy and Poland.

The governing body has good systems for monitoring the school and holding it to account. Visits by members of the governing body are linked to the school development plan and they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They work extremely well with the staff to ensure that systems for safeguarding are rigorously in place. These form the lynchpin of an excellent pastoral system that ensures each pupil thrives.

Parents' and carers' greater understanding of their children's progress is evidenced in comments regarding better communication between parents and teachers. The school has good capacity to improve.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



21 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Stoke Prior Primary School, Leominster, HR6 0ND**

Thank you so much for making my visit to your school so enjoyable. I found your school to be a good one because you are all making such good progress. I really enjoyed talking to all of you and was very grateful for the open and enthusiastic way in which you wanted to tell me all about your school. You are clearly very proud of it and your teachers.

I was really impressed by your confidence and the way you help and take care of each other. I enjoyed being in your lessons, hearing you read, looking at the work in your books and your displays. I enjoyed listening to you discussing your learning with each other in lessons and at break times. You ask some really good questions. You are making good progress in your learning and know how to keep yourselves safe and healthy.

The care and commitment of all of you, staff and pupils, makes your school not only successful, but also builds a happy and warm environment. In order to make your school even better, I have asked your teachers to:

- make sure everyone makes the best progress in improving their English and mathematics throughout the school
- give more time in lessons to checking your learning and identifying what you do not understand
- focus more on your learning rather than on teaching, and what teachers are doing, when they observe lessons.

You can help them by letting your teachers know if you do not quite understand how to do something.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper  
Lead inspector

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