

# Stoberry Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132227
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	315977
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Billington

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 on roll</b>	
School	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Hutchinsons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Hawkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	North Road Wells BA5 2TJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01749 672516
<b>Fax number</b>	01749 670822

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school with a broadly average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. All pupils speak English as their first language. Children's skills and knowledge when they start school are broadly as expected. The school has had several changes of staff over the past two years. There is a new senior management team and some teachers have just taken on new responsibilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has been through a period of decline when pupils were not achieving as well as they should have done, particularly in writing and mathematics. There has been noticeable improvement over the past year and achievement is now satisfactory. The most recent national test results show good improvement in terms of the gains that pupils made in Years 3 to 6 compared to the situation in previous years. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making steady progress and some are moving on at a good rate. However, standards at the end of Year 2 remain below average, with writing and mathematics being weaker than reading.

Teaching is satisfactory and has been strengthened by better use of assessment to pinpoint where pupils are in their learning. This information is beginning to be used effectively to identify which pupils may be underachieving and to target extra support. This has been a key factor in the recent improvements in pupils' achievement. However, assessment information is not being used to raise expectations of more capable pupils, who sometimes mark time in lessons. The curriculum has also been improved, particularly in the way that writing and aspects of mathematics are planned and taught.

The school's systems to check and measure its performance have improved. Staff and governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they have identified the right action to bring about change for the better. The school is demonstrating satisfactory capacity to improve. A key factor underpinning the recent improvement is the way that data is being used to check on how well the school, and individual pupils, are doing. This initiative has been focused on writing and has resulted in a better rate of progress in this area. This work is now being extended to other subjects. Subject leaders have played their part in improving the curriculum, but they are not sufficiently involved in checking on the impact of their work in terms of what is happening at classroom level. There is still a lack of rigour in systems for monitoring teaching and bringing about further improvement.

Children in the Reception Year develop good personal and social skills and are well prepared for later learning. Pupils throughout the school have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe. They have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Given this, there is scope for them to contribute more to the running of the school through taking on responsibilities and putting forward ideas for improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children make a sound start in the Reception Year. From an average base when they start school, they make satisfactory progress through the year. The majority are working well within expected levels by the start of Year 1. As in other year groups, more capable children could move on more quickly. Provision has improved over the past year in the way that the curriculum is planned to cover all areas of learning and to promote early literacy and numeracy skills. This led to improvements in the rate of progress for children who have just moved to Year 1.

New Reception children quickly settle into school. They show a good understanding of classroom routines and enjoy a good range of stimulating practical experiences. There is a good balance

between structured work with teachers or teaching assistants, assessment of children's skills and understanding and opportunities for them to choose activities and work together.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- Raise expectations of what more capable pupils might achieve in year groups throughout the school.
- Establish a rigorous system for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and the curriculum to ensure that provision meets the needs of all pupils.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to voice their views and take on responsibilities.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils in all year groups are making satisfactory progress. This represents an improvement in comparison to the past three years when pupils in Year 6 had not been making the gains that they should from their starting points in Year 3. Steps taken to address this have resulted in a significant proportion of pupils making up lost ground. The most recent test results for Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are above the national average and much improved on those of previous years. There is still a need to improve standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2. There has been a downward trend over the past three years and, while there has been limited improvement in reading this year, standards in writing and mathematics remain too low. This is because pupils have not made the progress that they should from a broadly average base when they started in Reception. Children currently in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing better than in previous years but this improvement has not yet filtered through to reverse the decline in standards at the end of Year 2.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from a range of programmes to address their needs and make sound progress. More capable pupils do not always achieve as well as they should because work is not tailored to meet their needs.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet and regular exercise, with many taking part in a good range of sporting activities. Pupils enjoy school, but attendance rates are only average because of families taking holidays in term time. The school has taken firm action to discourage this. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a good awareness of the needs of others but their understanding of life in a culturally diverse society is limited. Pupils are regularly involved in fundraising and local events, but make limited contribution to the running of the school, for example, through a pupil forum. Pupils have a sound basis of key skills, including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), to prepare them for their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils themselves are generally keen to learn. This positive feature is not always successfully exploited and lessons lack pace at times and not enough is achieved, particularly by more capable pupils. Lessons are generally well organised but over-long introductory sessions result in lack of involvement of pupils who sometimes 'switch off' as a result. Good use of external support, and a whole-school focus on improving the teaching of writing, has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement in this area. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to lessons, particularly in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Over the past year, there has been improvement in opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. Work has also gone on to improve pupils' knowledge and use of numbers in mathematics, but there is more to do to extend their skills in problem solving. The curriculum broadly meets pupils' needs but there is not always appropriate provision for the more capable pupils. ICT is used well across the curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils prepared an impressive PowerPoint presentation following a visit to Bristol to learn about slavery. Pupils benefit from a good range of educational visits to support their learning. A visit to Fleet Air Arm Museum resulted in Year 4 pupils expressing sensitive awareness of the experiences of refugees. One explained '...it must have been hard to have left your family and been worried about ever seeing them again'. Provision for sport, music and modern foreign languages is being further strengthened this year by the introduction of specialist teaching.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The school provides a caring environment and parents are particularly positive about this aspect of its work. Individual pupils are well known and the school provides well structured support for those with learning or behavioural difficulties. Pupils are confident that they have an adult to turn to if they have any concerns. Academic guidance is satisfactory, having been strengthened by recent improvements in assessment. Senior staff and class teachers have seen the benefit of careful tracking of progress in writing in order to raise achievement and recognise the need to extend this to other areas. Although pupils have responded well to having individual targets in writing, this practice has not yet been extended to subjects such as mathematics.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

Management systems have improved over the past year with the introduction of a tracking system to monitor pupils' progress in writing and regular reviews of their progress. This has led to improvements in standards, particularly in writing, for pupils in Years 5 and 6. This system is now being extended to mathematics so that, as with writing, additional support can be targeted for pupils who are not making expected gains. While analysis of data and support for

areas of weakness have resulted in improvements in standards at Year 6, monitoring systems overall need a greater degree of rigour. In particular, there needs to be a more systematic approach to checking how well teaching and the curriculum are meeting the needs of all pupils.

Senior staff and subject leaders have been successful in bringing about much needed improvements in provision and pupils' achievement but their work has been largely focused on Years 3 to 6. There is now a need for a sharper focus on the work of the younger pupils to boost standards by the end of Year 2. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and recognise the need to extend their role in monitoring its effectiveness.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

14 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Stoberry Park Primary School, Wells, BA5 2TJ

You may remember that a team of inspectors visited recently to see how you are getting on at school. Many thanks to those of you who explained the work that you were doing in lessons and met with us to talk about the activities that go on and what you think about your school. We found that you are getting a sound education. Several things have improved over the past year and this means that you are now doing as well as you should by the end of Year 6.

We were impressed with your positive attitudes to learning and your good behaviour. We were also impressed with how much you know about keeping fit and healthy. We know that many of you are enthusiastic about the clubs you can attend and that you enjoy the various visits that help you to learn.

We have suggested that the school needs to do four things now. These are:

- Make sure that children from Reception through to Year 2 do better in writing and mathematics – this has already begun to happen but it will be a little while before everyone is doing as well as he or she should.
- Make sure that those of you who are quick to learn are really made to think in every lesson.
- Get better at checking on how well your lessons are planned and taught.
- Plan for you to take on more responsibilities and make suggestions about how to improve the school.

You can help by continuing to work hard and putting forward ideas for ways in which your school can be even better.

With best wishes

Shirley Billington Lead Inspector

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Shirley Billington  
Lead Inspector