

# Overstone Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121849
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359099
<b>Inspection dates</b>	31 January 2011–1 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Hinds

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>	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Collins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Hulse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Sywell Road Overstone, Northampton NN6 0AG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 493861
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six teachers, while visiting eight lessons. Two of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's documentation, monitoring and assessment information, plans for improvement, important policies and pupils' work. The inspection team also looked at 59 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- It considered whether progress is consistently good for all pupils but especially the more able in English and mathematics.
- It assessed to what extent quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school has improved.
- It looked at how well the school promotes community cohesion and how this supports pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society.
- It explored the impact of middle leaders in raising the quality of teaching and learning.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although the percentage of pupils having a statement of additional need is above average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status, Silver Artsmark and Activemark.

**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

Overstone is a satisfactory school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the time they leave. Under the direction of the headteacher it has made some noteworthy improvements. Pupils' personal development is good and often exemplary; for example, their attendance and their appreciation of how to live a healthy lifestyle are outstanding. Pupils behave well and they have very positive attitudes to their learning. This is because all pupils benefit from an inclusive ethos where there are very effective levels of care and support. The headteacher is well regarded by the school community. Parents are fully supportive of the school as one parent sums up ' Our son loves going to school and is very happy. The school has a lovely supportive and family feeling and we are very grateful to all the staff'.

The capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Staff and the governing body share the headteacher's ambitious agenda for long-term improvement. Plans and procedures for monitoring the school are based on a sound understanding of strengths and areas for development. The agenda for improvement, though, is too wide ranging to allow a close focus on the most important things, and monitoring activities are not sufficiently frequent to secure more rapid improvement. This is because the roles of other leaders, including the governing body, are underdeveloped. The headteacher has implemented a well-conceived tracking system to check how effective improvement strategies are and what progress pupils make across the school. However, the impact of this has been limited as assessments are not always accurate, because work to check their accuracy has only just begun. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and there is some good practice, but teaching, the use of on-going assessments and marking are not yet consistently good enough to enable pupils to further improve their work. Despite close cooperation between staff and improvements in school self review, there remain few opportunities for staff to share their expertise and influence each others' practice, especially in mathematics.

Attainment continues to be average at the end of both key stages and in all core subjects (English, mathematics and science). Progress is uneven across each key stage, and although some pupils are beginning to make good progress most make satisfactory progress, including pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. Progress is also slower for pupils with high prior attainment in mathematics, so they do not always reach the higher levels in Year 6. This is compounded by insufficient challenging teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In the better lessons pupils are encouraged to work together, to self assess with clear guidance on how to improve their work through effective marking. Where teaching is not as strong, some of these areas are weaknesses and so pupils do not take a sufficiently active part in their learning.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and use of assessment in all core subjects, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - matching work better to the range of abilities, providing better challenge, particularly to more-able pupils.
    - securing whole school implementation of quality marking which provides clear guidance to pupils on how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work further
    - providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning through self and peer assessment and collaborative team work
    - sharing existing good practice in teaching and the use of assessment through coaching and modelling.
  - Improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by:
  - focusing more sharply on key issues and ensuring regular checks are made to measure the effectiveness of improvement work
    - moderating assessments on a regular basis using internal and external expertise
    - involving middle leaders fully in evaluating the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and progress
    - engaging the governing body in using the outcomes of these activities to hold leaders to account and plan for improvement.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are below national expectations, especially in some aspects of their personal development. Children make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 their attainment is average and sometimes above in early reading and writing skills

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their work. For example, in one mathematics lesson all pupils were highly motivated to answer their teacher's challenging quick fire questions. Their enjoyment and confidence was clear because the work enabled pupils to use their existing knowledge to solve a problem in a different context and to work together in pairs cooperatively. In lessons where they are given fewer opportunities for challenging and active involvement, for example where there is too much talking by teachers, pupils become restless and pace of learning drops. This variation in quality and in pace means progress of all groups of pupils is satisfactory rather than better. They are adequately prepared for the future. Though pupils' personal skills prepare them well and they are developing a good awareness of enterprise, they have average basic skills and some have limited experience of active learning.

Pupils feel safe and are very confident that staff will listen and quickly act to resolve their concerns. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy living and the majority take

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advantage of a wide range of extra sporting curricular activities. They make healthy choices at lunchtime and the curriculum and cookery club enable them to appreciate good nutrition. Pupils take their social responsibilities very seriously. Their involvement with the local community is commendable. They host tea parties at Christmas for the local community and enjoy distributing produce at harvest time to elderly residents in the village. They raise funds in imaginative ways to support local, national and international charities. Pupils have a good appreciation of different cultures and religions, which is enriched through a wide variety of visits and visitors and music and art projects.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

In the better lessons pupils are active learners as teachers use a variety of strategies to engage them. Pupils use mini white boards, jotting down their answers, working collaboratively to record their ideas. In these lessons teachers make explicit what they expect pupils to learn and how pupils are going to be able to judge whether they have been successful, through quality feedback and self assessment. For example in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were encouraged to work together to estimate which objects were the heavier and to report back to the class. In this lesson the class teacher's use of questions explored pupils' ideas and challenged all abilities. At key times the teacher referred back to what she expected the pupils to learn with clear guidance for different groups to assess their own progress.

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Teachers use assessments to plan work but these are not always well matched to pupils' learning needs. In addition, teachers do not always assess how well pupils understand the work they have been set in lessons, so lose the opportunity to fine-tune activities to meet needs, especially those of more-able pupils. Pupils with particular learning and behavioural needs, including those with a statement of special educational need are supported effectively both within and outside lessons, as teaching assistants are well deployed, patient and caring. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported. However, like their peers, the progress of both these groups is slowed when they are too passive. Although there are examples of impressive marking practice, which provides pupils with detailed comments on how they can improve their work, this is not consistently implemented.

The quality of the curriculum is good. Cross curricular links enable pupils to practice their mathematics and literacy skills in other subjects. Information and communication technology is used well across the school to support teaching and pupils' learning. A focus on learning about letters and sounds is having a positive influence on pupils' reading and writing skills. The relatively new curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils, but inconsistencies in teaching are limiting its effect on improving pupils' achievement. The wide range of enrichment activities provides pupils with relevant and first hand opportunities. It enables them to appreciate important issues relating to their personal development as well as a method of exploring moral and ethical dilemmas and understanding and celebrating cultural differences. The school, often in partnership with others, provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, to develop pupils' sporting, practical, artistic, musical and linguistic skills.

Recent improvements have had a significant impact on the provision for pupils whose circumstance may make them vulnerable. The school has strengthened partnerships with external agencies, who provide invaluable support. There are now focused individual plans for pupils who need additional support including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are now systematically analysed for their effectiveness and strategies are now tailored to individual needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides effective leadership with a clear, ambitious vision for the future. Morale in the school is high and all staff are motivated to move the school forward, but there has been limited work on moderating assessments and sharing judgements to make sure they are accurate. The senior teacher is keen to engage in the improvement agenda

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and to support the headteacher, but as yet her role is underdeveloped. Monitoring is not yet frequent enough to have secured significant improvements particularly on the quality of teaching and learning and use of assessment.

Community cohesion is promoted well at the school and local level. Work in the national and global contexts is at an early stage of development, though multicultural understanding is promoted well through the subject curriculum and through visitors. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity satisfactorily ensures that most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have equal access to all activities. However progress is only adequate and pupils are capable of achieving more. Measures to protect pupils are good. There are some highly effective systems in place for child protection and supporting pupils whose circumstance may make them more vulnerable. Good links with parents and carers encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education. A range of partnerships with local schools provide a good contribution to pupils' experiences, particularly in sport. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has a secure overview of the school's performance through data and reports from the headteacher. However, it is only just beginning to play a wider role in monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness so that it can have a major influence on the strategic direction of the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, with effective procedures for assessment and keeping children safe. Teaching is good and adults teach well-structured activities which are informed by accurate day-to-day assessments of children's learning needs. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities both inside and outside the classroom. Children work well together with confidence and co-operation,

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a tribute to the successful support adults have provided during the children's first term in school. The learning environment is stimulating with easily accessible resources, which develop the children's independence skills. However, mathematical displays and resources are not given as high a profile as early reading and writing skills. Furthermore there are some missed opportunities to extend the learning of more-able children in mathematics. The school has an excellent partnership with parents. They are encouraged to be fully involved in their child's learning because communication is strong. There are daily opportunities to meet staff, a 'post-it' scheme to celebrate individual achievement between home and school and termly open days which parents greatly appreciate.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The proportion of questionnaires returned was comparatively high, and parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Every parent or carer who responded to the questionnaire felt that: the school kept their child safe; that the teaching was good; the school was lead and managed effectively and that they were happy with their child's experience at the school. On every question the positive responses were much higher than in other primary schools. A few parents or carers had negative responses (8) to the statement: 'The school informs me about my child's progress'. Inspectors looked carefully at this concern and judge that the school's communication with parents regarding the progress their children make is good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Overstone 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 107 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	66	17	29	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	66	15	25	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	61	22	37	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	63	22	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	66	19	32	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	56	25	42	1	2	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)	30	51	26	44	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	56	24	41	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	37	32	54	2	3	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	49	28	47	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	61	23	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	78	13	22	0	0	0	0

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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and 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 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



2 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Overstone Primary School, Northampton, NN6 0AG**

Thank you all so much for the warm welcome you gave us to your school. You were so friendly, polite and kind to us and we really enjoyed watching you learn. Your singing in assembly of 'Thank you Lord' was lovely to hear. I also enjoyed visiting the Reception class to order a Chinese takeaway! I am especially grateful to those of you who came and talked to me on Monday.

Overstone provides you with a satisfactory education but it is improving all the time. Some of you are making good progress, but many of you are only making satisfactory progress. You all try very hard and enjoy the activities in your lessons. Your behaviour in class and around school is good and you are very considerate towards each other. You have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and you gave me some good advice about what I should eat (and what I shouldn't!) and you know exactly why it is important to keep yourselves fit. I can see why your school has an award for being healthy! Your attendance is high compared to other schools. You like the many extra-curricular clubs and activities you have and you like to celebrate differences in people, in cultures and religions. You also told me that the adults who work with you in school take very good care of you and you are right!

Your headteacher, the staff and governors are really keen to make Overstone even better. I have asked them to help you make more progress in your work by challenging you more in class; encouraging you to work together more in pairs and in teams; improving your teachers' marking so that it tells you exactly what to do to improve; and making sure that your headteacher, other leaders and governors keep a very close eye on the progress everyone is making. You can help too, by looking carefully at what your teachers tell you in their marking and by trying hard when you get some more difficult and challenging work.

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds

Lead inspector

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