

Nonington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118688
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358421
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenni Humphries
Headteacher	Tobin Wallace-Sims
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons and three teachers, and other members of staff were seen. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and from 50 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- Whether Year 6 pupils are on track to meet their targets in English and mathematics, and whether these are sufficiently challenging.
- How the school ensures that pupils' entitlements to the National Curriculum are met in full.
- The role that teachers play in the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Information about the school

Nonington Church of England is a small village primary school that is over-subscribed. About a third of the pupils come from the village, although an increasing number come from the surrounding area. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities are almost double the national average. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school works in close collaboration with a group of local primary schools.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage share a class with Year 1 pupils. There are two further classes. One caters for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, and the other is for Years 5 and 6. A more than usual number of pupils join the school at times other than the normal entry point and this has contributed to the school growing in size since the previous inspection. An example of this is that of the 11 current Year 6 pupils, only four have been in the school since the Reception year. The school has gained a number of awards including Investors in People (Gold) and the Eco-Schools award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Nonington is a good school. It is led well by the headteacher who, in a relatively short period of time, has developed provision, accelerated progress and established an effective staff team. Together with the governing body, they have created a very positive and exciting learning environment for pupils. Good quality teaching and a rigorous focus on the needs of individuals ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Current Year 6 pupils are on course to meet their challenging targets in both English and mathematics. This is because there is a good and successful focus on strengthening attainment in both English and mathematics and, in turn, this is rewarded by the acceleration of pupils' learning. Even so, staff recognise that pupils' skills require further development in applying and using their competence in calculation in practical situations. In English, progress in reading is particularly strong and the school's priority to extend the range of genre in pupils' writing is well founded.

High levels of care, guidance and support ensure that classrooms have a purposeful and positive atmosphere in which pupils enjoy learning together. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and relationships highly positive. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. Well-planned lessons ensure that pupils are given work that is appropriate to their abilities and understanding. In most lessons, pupils are taught in small groups in each classroom by well-trained learning support staff and teachers. Time is given for staff to check pupils' work at the end of each session. In consequence, marking is very thorough and comprehensive and provides excellent guidance.

The curriculum is of good quality. It is organised on an individual basis so that pupils may be working on a number of different themes and topics at the same time. Their progress is carefully checked against a National Curriculum checklist that ensures that the required work is covered and also that work becomes progressively harder as pupils move up through the school. At the same time, pupils become secure and independent learners who relish the many challenges that are provided for them. Even though the curriculum has many strengths, opportunities for enrichment are very limited. There are few extra-curricular activities available and only a limited number of trips and visits out of school are offered to enrich learning.

Staff morale is high and there is a clear commitment from staff to further improve outcomes and to raise standards. This is the result of good leadership and management and a clear strategic view of the future. The effective governing body is directly involved in the school's comprehensive monitoring and evaluation procedures. This results in the school's accurate self-evaluation and a precise picture of provision and pupils' progress. The resulting strengthening of teaching and learning and improvements in pupils' progress and the care, guidance and support provided demonstrate the school's good capacity to sustain improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift progress and achievement from good to outstanding by:
 - raising attainment in mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their good calculation skills in practical situations
 - embedding the recent priority to extend the range of genre in pupils' writing.
- Extend the range of curricular enrichment by:
 - providing more extra-curricular clubs
 - enabling pupils to make more visits out of school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Reception year with skills and abilities that are generally below expected levels, particularly in their reading and writing skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and learning and they show obvious pleasure in all of their activities. In addition to making good progress in English and mathematics, pupils also achieve well in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Attainment is rising and is in line with the national average when they leave. Pupils' enjoyment of learning was clear during an outstanding Years 5 and 6 drama lesson. The pupils and teacher, all in pirate dress, were focusing on persuasive writing and they were finding ways to persuade 'Barbarous Black Beard' not to make 'Bad Bobby Bones' walk the plank. Here, because the excellent teaching made the scenario come alive, pupils were highly enthusiastic and full of excellent ideas when they went on to write good-quality extended pieces in the persuasive genre. In all lessons, teachers make learning intentions clear and these are consistently related to the pupils' own 'red folders'. In these, pupils track their own progress, affirmed by the staff, as they tackle the work set for them. This ensures that pupils have a good understanding of what to do. Pupils also benefit from the high expectations that teachers have and this, too, ensures that all make good progress.

The good arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure that they make good progress towards their individual targets and their achievement is rising. In addition, because there are very effective induction arrangements for the many pupils who join Years 1 to 6 during the school year, rather than at the usual times, these pupils settle quickly and achieve well.

Pupils say that they value what the school provides for them. It is entirely natural for the older pupils to help and support younger ones. This was the case when the whole school walked to the church for its weekly service, with older pupils taking great care of the younger ones, particularly as they crossed the road. They are considerate of each other's feelings and respectful of their differences. Pupils have a strong sense of responsibility and mature attitudes, as reflected, with pride, in the gaining of the Eco-School award. They have a good understanding of the important factors which affect the different aspects of their health. Their good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when linked to their good grasp of basic skills and their above average attendance ensure that they are prepared well for the next stages of their education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Staff ensure that pupils enjoy learning by providing them with well-organised lessons that are pitched at the right level to meet the differing ages and learning needs present in each class. Good use is made of time so that lessons move along at a brisk pace. The teaching assistants make a particularly strong contribution to learning through their effective leadership of lessons where they teach small groups and individuals. There were weaknesses in the provision of ICT at the time of the previous inspection. These have been eliminated and teachers make good use of the excellent range of resources available to them. This was evident in a good mathematics lessons in which Years 2, 3 and 4 pupils were using the laptops to good effect when learning how to tackle mathematical problems. Here, the pupils were methodically taught what questions they needed to ask themselves to solve some logic puzzles. Because the computer-based problems interested the pupils, they all concentrated well and successfully met the challenging learning objectives. The school's assessment and recording processes greatly aid the many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It enables their needs to be identified very early and good-quality learning plans to be developed.

There has been a complete restructuring of the curriculum since the previous inspection. It is now of good quality. Pupils are supported exceptionally well to develop independence in their learning by undertaking the study of a wide range of projects that are well founded and stem from the pupils' own interests as well as meeting National Curriculum

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requirements. Pupils' development of learning skills is tracked meticulously and this ensures that work being undertaken is challenging and exciting. Consequently, their progress, personal development and well-being are good. Additional activities are few and infrequent. Even so, pupils do benefit from the local sports partnership which offers a wide range of sporting opportunities and also an annual residential visit.

Many parents and carers commented on the inclusive and positive ethos that the staff generate. Older pupils who have joined the school in the later years of Key Stage 2 are particularly enthusiastic about how well they were welcomed by their new classmates. A few said that their parents and carers had moved them to Nonington because they were unhappy at their previous school. All confirmed that they were now very happy and enjoying school and this was verified by the positive comments made by their parents and carers. Highly effective links with outside agencies for those pupils who have additional learning needs or whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable ensure that needs are fully met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management. He has successfully built on the many good features found at the last inspection and injects much enthusiasm and commitment into the school. He ensures that all staff are fully involved in self-evaluation and have a rigorous focus on the learning and progress of pupils. There is a strong development programme for all staff and this is recognised in the school gaining the Investors in People gold award. Teaching and learning are monitored carefully by leaders at all levels through a range of activities. This has led to consistency in the quality of teaching and, consequently, pupils' good progress. All the staff work closely together to check, meticulously, that all individuals and groups of pupils are making at least good progress. Improvement in learning and progress, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, indicates the success of the school's drive to promote equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The governing body is well informed because there are good procedures in place for members of the governing body to regularly check on provision and directly observe for themselves how well the school is meeting its improvement priorities. Their vigilance enables them to both support and challenge the school and to make a good contribution to its strategic development. Systems for safeguarding pupils are robust and they follow good practice. Procedures are evaluated regularly by leaders and managers and the governing body. Consequently, pupils feel completely safe and parents and carers agree

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that their children are safe in school. There are strong links with parents and carers and the school does much to encourage and support their involvement in their children's learning. They are given many opportunities to air their views.

The school is a cohesive community and staff and the governing body are keenly aware of the need to ensure that the pupils' horizons are broadened by linking with other schools. This is achieved, locally, through the consortium of schools and also by having close links with a very contrasting school community located in London in a different cultural and socio-economic context from that of this one. Pupils benefit from the exchange of emails and ICT presentations with their pen pals in the other school. There are very close links with the local community. These include pupils raising money for the restoration of the war memorial and taking part in remembrance services. Pupils are also involved in outreach work to housebound parishioners and to residents of almshouses in Canterbury who value contact with the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The staff provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere and place a suitably high priority on ensuring the children's welfare. As a result, they settle well and make excellent progress in their personal and social skills. This is aided by an excellent induction programme that enables all children to attend the school on one afternoon each week for a year prior to entry. Furthermore, Year 1 children relish the opportunity to care and support their younger classmates. Teaching is consistently good and staff ensure that there is a careful balance provided of those activities that are directed by adults and those the children choose for themselves.

Recent improvements to the accommodation have extended the learning space to enable Year 1 pupils to be taught in a separate area. In addition, the outside space has been

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refurbished and developed. This now provides a safe and secure space that is organised very well to enable children to play and learn across all the required areas. The space is very small and does not enable children to use wheeled toys as a matter of routine, although these are accommodated by making use of the school playground.

Assessments are thorough and careful attention is paid by staff to ensuring that children's progress is carefully recorded in 'learning journeys'. These consist of well-judged observation notes as well as extended observations and they are supported by a wide range of photographs. When taken together, these enable staff to ensure that future activities are planned to meet each child's needs. As a result of this good provision, many children reach the required goals and some exceed them in their personal and social development. Staff are keenly aware that the development of children's reading and writing skills lags behind and, as a result, a good programme has been developed to secure the children's use of sounds and letters and is having a positive impact.

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

A much larger than usual proportion of parents and carers completed questionnaires. Their responses were overwhelmingly supportive with all unanimous in their support of the school in response to eight of the 13 questions asked. Parents and carers were also unanimous in saying that teaching and progress are good and that the school keeps their children safe. In addition, they indicated that, overall, they are satisfied with the school. Many parents and carers wrote positive comments about their children's experiences in the school. They highlighted, in particular, the leadership and management of the headteacher and the staff with many noting that their children thoroughly enjoy school and learning. These are summarised by the parent or carer who wrote, 'Each child's welfare and education are of great importance and each one is viewed as an individual. This has a positive effect on the children.' A few parents and carers said that they did not feel that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. This was reviewed as part of the inspection and it was found that the school's communication and consultation processes are good and exceed those found in most primary schools.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nonington Church of England 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 75 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	54	22	44	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	82	8	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	50	24	48	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	50	25	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	74	13	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	60	18	36	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	52	24	48	0	0	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)	26	52	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	52	23	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	50	20	40	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	48	21	42	4	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	68	16	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	70	15	30	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).

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"> ■ 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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nonington Church of England Primary School, Dover, CT15 4LB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. This letter is to tell you what we found. You told us that you enjoy school and that you learn well. We agree. Yours is a good school, and you are helped to learn well because the adults look after you well and their teaching is good. I particularly enjoyed your church service. You are lucky that your headteacher plays the organ so well because it made it a joyous occasion. It was a great contrast, but I also enjoyed your Red Nose Day. Your pirate outfits made me feel really scared!

We were impressed with how well you get on together. Your behaviour is outstanding. You have a good understanding about being healthy and you feel very safe in school. We think that your headteacher is doing an excellent job and he is helped by all the staff. They are always checking on how well you are doing because they want you always to do as well as you can.

Even in a good school like yours, there are things that can be improved. We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to make sure that you get lots of opportunities to do practical mathematics activities. This is so you can apply your good calculation skills when working in other subjects. We have also asked that you get even more opportunities to practise your writing in different styles. Finally, we want more lunchtime and after-school clubs for you to participate in and that you get the chance to make more educational visits.

We really enjoyed our time at your school. Thank you for taking time to talk to us and letting us watch your lessons. We hope that you continue to find your time in school enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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