

Nonington Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Nonington, Dover, Kent CT15 4LB

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have resulted in too much variation in pupils' rates of progress.
- Leaders do not routinely evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve outcomes.
- The quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 and the early years is too variable and requires improvement. Teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment information to plan learning tasks that meet the needs and interests of different groups of pupils. Some pupils rely heavily on adult support.
- The school curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils build sufficiently on their skills from one year to the next.
- Leaders are only just beginning to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding. Disadvantaged pupils are not making rapid enough progress to catch up with their peers.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive in key stages 1 and 2 and there is low-level disruption in some classrooms.
- Attendance is below the national average and rates of persistent absence are too high.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim executive headteacher's good leadership has already brought about significant improvement to the school.
- Leaders have accurately identified the actions they need to take to improve outcomes for pupils and ensure that they are ready for the next stage of their education.
- Training is being used effectively to improve the skills and knowledge of staff.
- Parents and carers value the improvements made by the interim executive headteacher.
- Governors possess the skills, knowledge and ambition to support and challenge the school effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective in all key stages. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe.
- The early years leader is taking positive action to improve teaching and learning. Leaders have improved the learning environment.
- Good transition arrangements enable children to make a confident start to school. Children in the early years behave well and enjoy school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - teachers accurately assess the needs of all pupils and use this information to plan tasks that match pupils' abilities and provide sufficient challenge
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' achievement regardless of their starting points
 - teachers plan activities which interest, engage and motivate pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders evaluate the impact of their plans and actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - the curriculum is planned more effectively so that it meets the needs of pupils to enable them to make good progress in all subjects
 - pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, including in the early years, and leaders more rigorously evaluate the impact of this aspect of the school's work.
- Improve pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour by ensuring that:
 - rates of attendance improve and persistent absence is reduced so that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance
 - low-level disruption is eliminated.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this area of the leadership and management of the school may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The recently appointed interim executive headteacher has taken effective action to address weaknesses in the school. He has been determined in driving forward his vision for the school so that it is focused on improving the learning of all pupils. The reorganisation of teaching and learning and new approaches to assessment are beginning to have a positive effect. However, while teaching is not yet securely good, the interim executive headteacher's leadership is resulting in significant improvements within the school.
- Leaders' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is improving. Improvement plans accurately identify the areas the school needs to improve and contain milestones so that improvements can be measured. The impact of this work can be seen in the recent improvements to the systems to keep pupils safe in school. However, the impact of improvements is not consistently evaluated. This means leaders cannot always be certain how their actions are improving pupils' outcomes.
- Many parents who spoke with inspectors or responded to the online questionnaire are happy with the school. They recognise that the significant turbulence in staffing has been challenging. Parents are pleased with the improvements they are seeing under the leadership of the interim executive headteacher.
- Leaders have only recently begun to monitor effectively the progress that pupils make in their learning. This means that previous inconsistent progress has only been identified by leaders lately. Recent changes to the school's assessment and tracking systems mean that leaders are now able to monitor the progress pupils make much more accurately. The impact of this improved scrutiny can be seen in the increasing rates of progress for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Middle leaders are benefiting from a range of training opportunities that develop the skills they need to lead effectively. These include a mentor programme using experienced and able leaders from other local schools. This training has resulted in middle leaders being more effective in their roles. However, they are not yet evaluating the impact of their work on the quality of teaching or pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training to enable them to improve their teaching. For example, teachers now plan sequences of lessons in English more effectively. The impact of this is evident in the progress pupils are making in their writing.
- The curriculum requires improvement because it does not yet provide the skills and opportunities for pupils to make good progress in all subjects. The curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to explore some interesting topics. For example, pupils recently visited a pharmaceutical company to support their learning in science. However, other subjects are not planned in a way that ensures progression in pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Leaders effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The

interim executive headteacher has rightly identified a need to raise the profile of this aspect of the curriculum. The core principles of the school, captured in the Nonington values, are used well in classrooms and collective worship to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils show that they understand these values and can relate them to their lives, for example by knowing how to be a good friend or the importance of telling the truth.

- Leaders have used the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport to improve the quality of PE teaching in the school. Specialist teachers deliver a range of sporting activities in lessons and at lunchtimes. Consequently, pupils have opportunities to develop their skills and stay healthy.

Governance of the school

- The experienced chair of governors is very well supported by the rest of the governing body. Governors are passionate about Nonington School and are single minded in their ambition to see it thrive. Training needs are identified and quickly addressed. The impact of this training can be seen in the work of the governing body, for example in recent improvements to safeguarding. Governors have evaluated their effectiveness and recruited additional members with the necessary skills and expertise to challenge and support the school.
- Governors visit the school frequently. Their visits are focused and followed up to ensure that their recommendations result in impact. They have, rightly, been focused on stabilising the school and ensuring that it provides a safe and secure environment. This means that they are only beginning to see the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes. Governors know that the use of pupil premium funding has not been evaluated well enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school carries out appropriate and thorough checks on the suitability of staff, volunteers and visitors on all who work in the school. Staff are well trained in identifying and reporting concerns. The designated staff for child protection ensure that appropriate action is taken if required. Leaders make sure that safeguarding records are kept and understand the importance of being able to access information quickly and simply.
- Leaders make sure that pupils learn about different aspects of keeping safe, including when online. The school invites professionals into school to help pupils learn about other aspects of safety, for example the talk in assembly from members of the fire service.
- Parents spoken with and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that their children are safe and well cared for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable and not consistently good. Teachers do not routinely use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to inform the next steps in pupils' learning. This results in tasks that are not accurately matched to pupils' needs and a lack of challenge for some pupils.
- In some classes, pupils make slower progress than they should. At times, learning moves on too quickly and pupils do not have sufficient time to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers have benefited from professional development to improve aspects of their teaching. A good example of this is recent training to support teachers in providing more independent learning opportunities for pupils. However, this has yet to have a notable impact as pupils sometimes lack the skills they need to work together without the support of adults.
- The teaching of writing is improving in the school. Teachers plan effective sequences of lessons to make sure that there is progression in learning. Interesting contexts and texts are used to stimulate pupils' ideas. Pupils are keen to write at length. The quality of pupils' work is improving as a result of the professional development that teachers have received.
- Teachers demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge when teaching mathematics. They explain new learning and address misconceptions effectively. However, at times pupils find the work too easy or too hard which limits their progress.
- The school library provides a welcoming environment for pupils to choose from a good range of texts. Pupils say that they enjoy reading and they enjoy making use of the library during playtimes. Outcomes in reading at the end of key stage 2 are in line with national averages.
- The teaching of phonics has improved recently. Staff teach phonics effectively and pupils use their phonic skills across the curriculum. This results in pupils applying their understanding of phonics when they write.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Many pupils are too reliant on adult support. Consequently, not enough pupils develop the skills to enable them to be really successful learners.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying is rare and that adults take effective action to stop it. Pupils know how to report any worries or concerns that they have, trusting adults to help them. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online. Pupils know about the need to keep personal information private.
- Pupils take pride in their writing in English and present their work well. However, adults' expectations of pupils' writing are not consistently high in other subjects and, as

a result, pupils' work is not as well presented.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. However, where teaching and support are not as effective as they could be, pupils lose interest and their concentration wanders. Although this is not true in all classes, this means that pupils are not consistently well motivated or interested in their learning. Pupils say that, at times, low-level disruption in classrooms limits the progress that they make.
- Attendance remains below the national average and rates of persistent absence are high. This is because a small number of pupils do not regularly attend school. This has a negative impact on these pupils' outcomes. Recent refinements to the school's monitoring is helping to improve attendance.
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes are well managed and supervised. Pupils are provided with a wide range of activities to keep them energetically engaged as well as areas where pupils can play quietly together.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Leaders' recent good work is improving pupils' progress in the school. However, progress remains too variable and is not yet rapid enough to ensure that pupils achieve their full potential. The school's own expectations for pupils' progress are not consistently high enough to overcome historic underachievement.
- Over time, the most able pupils do not attain well enough and reach the higher standards at the end of key stages 1 or 2. Leaders are addressing this issue and the most able pupils are now being given more opportunity to complete more challenging tasks.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, like that of all pupils, is too variable across the school. Leaders have improved the identification of and support for these pupils, and a result, many of them are now making stronger progress.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are enabling gaps in pupils' learning to be identified and addressed. This is leading to improved rates of progress, particularly in writing and phonics.
- There have been recent improvements in the quality of pupils' spelling across the school. Recent actions taken by leaders have led to a more consistent approach to the teaching of spelling. However, some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have significant gaps in their learning from when teaching was weaker.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is variable. Children do not make enough progress when completing independent activities. This is because tasks are not always clear and many children are very reliant on adult support. As a result, children are not developing their early reading, writing and mathematical skills well enough. However, when working directly with a teacher or teaching assistant children make better progress.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been below the national average for the last three years. During this time, no children have exceeded the expected standards in reading, writing or mathematics. However, the very small number of children in each cohort means that it is difficult to draw meaningful comparisons between national figures and different year groups' achievement.
- The new early years leader is knowledgeable and focused on improving provision. She has a clear understanding of the areas to improve and is beginning to make a positive impact. For example, the teaching of phonics has improved this year and children are making better progress. However, leaders do not use the pupil premium well enough to support disadvantaged children in order that they make the progress they need to catch up.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the physical learning environment and children now have the opportunity to learn in a purposeful and organised environment.
- Leaders have ensured that all welfare requirements are met. Children enjoy being at school, behave well and feel safe in their classroom and on the playground. Raised expectations from staff are helping children to improve their levels of independence in the classroom. Nevertheless, leaders rightly recognise the need for this to remain a focus.
- Transition arrangements are planned carefully. Children who join the school benefit from an extended period when they spend time in the classroom prior to starting school in September. This means that children are familiar with the classroom environment well before they formally start school.
- Parents feel that their children are well cared for and they are happy with the early years provision. Information is shared between home and school about how children are progressing in their learning. 'Learning leaves' are used effectively to share achievements and these are prominently displayed in the classroom.

School details

Unique reference number	118688
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10046834

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Rigby
Interim executive headteacher	John Dexter
Telephone number	01304 840348
Website	www.noningtonprimary.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@nonington.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- Following the previous inspection, the school endured a period of turbulence in leadership. The interim executive headteacher was appointed in November 2017.
- This is a much smaller-than-average primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school has additional provision for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs. However, currently no pupils attend this provision.

- Since the previous inspection, the school has federated with Goodnestone Church of England Primary School. The two schools share the same governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. The majority of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their work to find out more about how well they are learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books across the full range of subjects to evaluate the progress pupils are making in English, mathematics and the wider curriculum.
- Meetings were held with small groups of pupils and inspectors talked informally with many others around the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Meetings were held with the interim executive headteacher and other leaders. In addition, inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, school improvement plans and assessment information. Inspectors also reviewed minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with parents and took into account the 10 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and seven written comments from parents. They considered four responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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