



Nonsuch Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102985
Local Authority Sutton
Inspection number 286540
Inspection date 14 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chadacre Road
School category	Community		Stoneleigh
Age range of pupils	3–11		Epsom KT17 2HQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8393 9209
Number on roll (school)	258	Fax number	020 8786 7015
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr J Griffin
		Headteacher	Mrs G Dibsall
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Nonsuch is an average-size primary school with a 52 place Nursery. The school is highly regarded within the local community and always oversubscribed. Almost all pupils live in owner occupied houses, with a lower than average number eligible for free school meals. On entry to the Nursery, pupils are generally above average. The proportion of children from ethnic minority backgrounds has increased in recent years to around a quarter. The majority of pupils whose first language is not English are not at the early stages of language acquisition. Pupils' mobility is above average, for example 30% of the current Year 6 class joined after Year 2.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Nonsuch is an outstanding school. The dedicated staff work as a team to provide high quality education. The national test results in 2006 for Year 6 put it amongst the highest performing schools nationally. Behind these impressive results are outstanding teaching and a wide-ranging and stimulating curriculum which enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to make substantial gains in their learning. From a variable, but above average start in the Nursery, pupils' standards are consistently well above average levels by the time they leave the school. The supportive school ethos was commented on by many parents. As one wrote, 'My daughter is now at High School but constantly wants to visit (Nonsuch) after school and on holidays...you only return that often to places where you were very happy'.

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are outstanding, and these young children are enabled to make an especially good start to their education in the excellent Nursery. Teaching and learning throughout the school are never less than good, and often outstanding. Observations and assessments by teachers of what the pupils know and can do are excellent. The information gained is used outstandingly well to guide and challenge pupils and to move them rapidly on to the next stage in their learning. The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by a very good range of additional activities. The way that the outside area on the school field has been developed in themes to represent every part of the world affords all pupils a unique range of experiences. However, the outside play areas for the two Foundation Stage classes are under-developed. It is in the school plans to develop these areas to afford these younger children even greater opportunities as already identified.

Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, feel safe and secure. Their personal development is outstanding. By the time they leave the school, they have developed into well-rounded individuals with excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are excellently equipped for the future to cope with academic and social challenges. Parents, who enjoy a close relationship with the school, are very pleased about this. As one wrote, 'I feel the standard of teaching is excellent, and communication between teaching staff and parents is brilliant. My son was extremely happy at Nonsuch and his final year in Year 6 was exceptional.'

The headteacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by all staff and developments are driven forward at a very good pace. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has excellent systems for monitoring its work. There is an unremitting drive to improve. The staff's determination not to rest on their laurels is evident and the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide better, purpose-built, outside play areas for the two Foundation Stage classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school, correctly, have graded achievement and standards as outstanding. Standards are consistently well above those expected for the pupils' ages by the time they leave and their achievement is outstanding. From an excellent start in the Foundation Stage, pupils in Years 1 and 2 grow in confidence. In Key Stage 1 in the 2006 national assessments, pupils reached standards that were well above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics.

In 2006, very high standards were achieved in English, mathematics and science in national tests at the end of Year 6. School data, which tracked these pupils' performance since they were in Year 2, shows that they achieved outstandingly well. Pupils' targets are challenging and in national assessments were exceeded, with a high proportion of pupils achieving the highest level.

The school is especially good at assessing how well its pupils are doing so that gaps and weaknesses are identified straight away and tackled speedily. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good, as is the provision for those pupils with special gifts or talents. As a result, the vast majority make outstanding progress. Throughout the school pupils' have very good skills in using computers and use them well for research.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a strength of the school. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are keen to take responsibility both for classroom tasks and by taking on school roles. Pupils speak warmly about their school. They are polite, well-mannered and confident when talking with each other and adults. Attendance is above the national average and all pupils participate fully in lessons and behave exceptionally well. They feel safe at school and show great confidence in asking any adult for help if they need it. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of how to stay healthy, by eating sensibly and enjoying the many physical activities.

Pupils participate in a wide range of activities that help them to understand about the beliefs and lives of people from different cultures. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. In addition to fund raising for different charities, the school council has been instrumental in putting forward ideas that are making a real difference to the quality of their own school. Pupils are learning the necessary skills that will enable them to settle into their future schools well, and become good citizens in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are never less than good and often excellent. Teachers' planning is exceptional. Their high expectations are firmly based on the use of careful, but simple, assessments. This ensures that tasks are pitched at the right level for all pupils. As many pupils confirmed, 'Learning is fun.' Lessons move forward at a very good pace and pupils' attention is held throughout. The use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards and the school grounds, inspire pupils to try their hardest. Teachers and teaching assistants are very skilful at creating a learning environment where pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and work together to meet the exacting challenges they are given. Marking is used very well to give very clear and immediate pointers about what pupils need to do reach even higher standards. Targets are used very well and all pupils know what they have to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is excellent. Learners enjoy and benefit from a wide range of activities inside and outside the classroom. Approaches to learning match the needs of all pupils including those who have learning difficulties, or have particular gifts and talents. Resources are used very well. There is a good range of high quality additional activities that enrich the curriculum and promote pupils' development and enjoyment. There has been a strong focus on developing pupils' creative skills and the opportunities for dance, art and music have done much to extend learning. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development are excellent and the school uses an exceptional range of community and other links to enhance learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very high level of care for its pupils, and related procedures, including child protection, are very good. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out thoroughly and regularly. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. Children settle into the Foundation Stage particularly well because of the outstanding care taken over the home visits and induction process. From this early start, staff members know all pupils really well and treat them with respect and fairness at all times. The partnership with parents is exemplary. The Friends of the School Association provides unstinting support and is a real asset to the school.

Linked to the exceptional practice in pastoral care, there is the robust assessment of academic progress. Comprehensive assessment information is regularly updated and pupils' strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and appropriate support or extra challenges are provided at all times.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Teamwork is of the highest quality and everyone involved in the school shows an unremitting drive to achieve their best. The school has an excellent track record of achieving high standards which has been maintained through revamping the curriculum, guiding staff through effective monitoring and restructuring the staff team. A good example of the teamwork has been the very successful introduction of Big Writing where pupils focus with great care on particular aspects of writing such as vocabulary, openers, punctuation and connectives. This initiative has raised and maintained the high standards in writing across the school. Not only were the school staff very well trained in the details of this provision but two workshops were held for governors and parents.

The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. Governors and parents provide first-rate support. There is a clear understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school's self-evaluation, although occasionally modest, is extremely effective. The school development plan provides very clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards and takes into consideration support and initiatives from all sources. The outstanding governing body is fully involved in this process and they bring a wide range of skills to bear as they act as critical friends, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where this is judged to be necessary.

Management at all levels is very good with excellent systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Within the school there is a high commitment to include all pupils in all activities and the care and concern for them all is a high priority. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school. The school is very well placed to continue its successes and has an excellent capacity to improve.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school. I enjoyed my time with you and would now like to tell you what I found out about your school. I agree with what some of you told me - Nonsuch is a great school.

I think you all do very well and really try hard at all times. You are all making very good progress and I was very impressed that you knew what to do to make your work even better. I saw that you know you are especially lucky to have so many different activities both during and after school. I also saw how keen you are to take part and how well you behave. Many of you told me how much you enjoy being at school, and how proud you are of what you can do. I am sure that you will continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like and where you can all learn.

I would especially like to thank the School Council for talking to me and those of you who showed me round the exciting new garden on the field. I have asked the staff and governors to make sure that the outside play areas for the nursery and reception classes are just as good when they are redone.

Finally, I would like to thank you all once again for your help. I wish you well in the future.

With kind regards

David Marshall

(Lead inspector)