

Nursery Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125500
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	359903
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Barber
Headteacher	Becky Pebody
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who saw seven teachers in seven lessons. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body, the School Improvement Partner and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at documentation about pupils' progress and school development planning, and evidence of self-evaluation. They considered 27 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and 57 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Is teaching challenging enough to improve attainment and progress in writing and mathematics?
- How effectively is the school working to reduce high levels of absence?
- To what extent are all leaders involved in identifying weaknesses and acting urgently to drive forward improvements?
- How effective have recent improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes been in improving children's progress?

Information about the school

This is a small school. Pupils are almost entirely from White British backgrounds with a small number from minority ethnic groups. No pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but numbers vary considerably between years. The school has the national Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in separate Nursery and Reception classes. The school runs a before- and after-school club which was also inspected. There is a private nursery on the same site as the school which was not part of this inspection.

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

Nursery Hill is a satisfactory school. It is improving and parents are generally pleased with the education their children receive. One wrote, 'the school has gone from strength to strength and continues to improve'. Others commented on how well they are informed about their children's progress.

Attainment is close to average and rising. Pupils' progress is satisfactory and improving after a period of substantial staff changes. However, some of the most-able pupils do not achieve quite as well as they should because work does not always stretch them enough. Attainment fell in the most recent end of Key Stage 2 assessments, owing to weaknesses in numeracy and literacy skills. Strategies to improve these weaknesses are showing success and standards in mathematics are rising. However, improvements in literacy are less evident because pupils' vocabulary is limited and they sometimes use words inaccurately. Spelling is sometimes careless and sentence structure is not good enough for pupils to express their ideas fluently.

Teaching is satisfactory. It is improving, and well-planned lessons and generally high expectations are leading to better progress and learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, but more-able pupils do not always make as much progress as they could. Where learning is good, the teacher moves pupils into different groups where work is more challenging and meets their particular needs effectively. Marking gives a clear indication of what pupils can do and how to improve their work. While pupils know what their target levels are, older pupils are not sure of the levels at which they are currently working. This means they are not sure about how rapidly they are making progress or how far they are from achieving their targets. The curriculum is good with a good range of out-of-school clubs and sports. Trips, visitors' contributions, and special days to examine life and traditions in other countries capture pupils' interest and promote their enthusiasm to learn effectively. Activities to reinforce numeracy skills are successful and the strategies to improve literacy are well planned, though at an early stage of implementation.

Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and say that bullying is unusual and dealt with well. Pupils behave well and treat each other with consideration. They have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and they take on responsibilities seriously. However, attendance is low and, although it is improving, a large minority of pupils are away from school too much, often owing to holidays taken during term time. Given broadly average levels of attainment, satisfactory progress and improving attendance, pupils' preparation for their future lives is satisfactory.

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and pupils feel confident going to adults for help. Pupils are well safeguarded by robust arrangements. Parents praised the school in

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how well it supported pupils after the recent death of a teacher. Links with families are generally satisfactory. However, in spite of the school's efforts, some families are not cooperating with the drive to decrease the high levels of absence. The quality of care for pupils in the before- and after-school club is satisfactory and children enjoy the wide range of practical activities provided.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the headteacher provides a clear direction for the school's improvement. The headteacher and other leaders have accurately identified areas for improvement and have urgently introduced actions to help raise standards. Improvements are at an early stage, but secure foundations for development have been established. New staff are well supported. The governing body, which has experienced considerable changes, provides a satisfactory level of support and challenge, although it is not providing enough support to improve attendance. In the Early Years Foundation Stage new leadership and changes to provision are leading to improving progress, although the most-able children are not always given activities that extend them sufficiently. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress by December 2011 by ensuring:
 - teaching is challenging throughout the school, especially for the most- able pupils
 - older pupils know the levels they are working at so that they can see clearly what they need to achieve to reach their individual targets.
- Improve standards, especially in writing, by December 2011 by ensuring pupils:
 - spell accurately
 - use complex sentences effectively in all subjects to explain their understanding and knowledge fluently
 - gain a wide vocabulary which they use precisely in their writing.
- Reduce absence through a concerted effort from school and the governing body to impress on families the importance of high levels of attendance to assure good progress.
- 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.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils start school with below average attainment for their age, especially in literacy and numeracy. Initially they make good progress, but until recently, progress slowed in other classes. It is now improving as new staff establish more effective teaching throughout the school. Pupils enjoy learning, and are particularly encouraged by interesting, challenging activities that provide opportunities for independent learning. The focus on basic calculation skills, measuring and understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes is leading to better skills and improved progress in mathematics. Accurate use of mathematical terminology is helping pupils to become confident in expressing their

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mathematical understanding and they often seek more challenging work. There is some evidence of rising standards in literacy. For example, in one Key Stage 2 class, pupils used dictionaries and discussed their ideas with each other so that they gained confidence and competence in using a wide range of words to introduce feeling and mood to a science fiction text. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because staff encourage them to work independently, to read for themselves and to express their own ideas and understanding. Their rate of progress, too, is improving. The small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds also makes satisfactory progress.

Pupils express their own views and ideas confidently. The school council is improving in its capacity to represent pupils' views. Different, small groups of pupils engage effectively in a wide range of activities. For example, some pupils have worked with the local council to reposition the 30mph zone further away from school, therefore slowing traffic outside of the school, and others raise money for their chosen charities. They enjoy competing in sports and classroom activities and contributing to the success of their school 'houses'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a sound and improving knowledge and respect for the values and traditions of other cultures in Britain and around the world.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

The teaching of literacy is improving. Where effective practice is established pupils make good progress. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, the focus on correct pronunciation, accurate spelling of frequently used words and the construction of sentences had a positive impact on pupils' progress and confidence in using language. Marking encourages pupils to evaluate their work and try hard to improve it. Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons, and for the pupils with particular difficulties who are withdrawn from lessons for specific support. This strategy is also beneficially used to provide extension work for the most-able pupils.

The curriculum is well organised and successful in making pupils enthusiastic about school and learning. Focus weeks on different countries, and visitors who demonstrate particular areas of expertise in the food, music and art of different cultures enrich pupils' experiences. Numeracy and literacy activities are incorporated into all subjects which is having a positive impact on improving their basic skills, in mathematics in particular. Innovative practice to promote different writing styles is becoming evident. For example, fire service visitors were used effectively to introduce pupils to report writing.

The support for pupils and parents and carers who are in vulnerable circumstances is very good and extremely well supported up by external social and medical agencies. Pastoral care throughout the school is good. The school has implemented numerous strategies to attempt to improve attendance, including contacting homes, working with individual families and using external agencies. It has assembled convincing evidence to show that pupils do not achieve well when they are absent from school. The response of some parents has been positive, but has been limited from others.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the work of the school well. They are successfully embedding improvements into the every day work of the school. New staff, especially those in leadership roles, have quickly planned and implemented strategies to improve teaching and learning, and these are starting to be effective. The governing body is rapidly gaining the knowledge and skills it needs to support the school and provide challenging targets to hold it to account. Efforts to increase the engagement of parents in pupils' learning are ensuring increasing numbers of parents attend school activities and consult with teachers about their children's progress.

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Safeguarding requirements are fully met. As well as views of the governing body and staff, the concerns of parents and pupils are sought and taken into account in ensuring the school is safe. The school has a wide range of increasingly effective links with other schools and organisations to support the curriculum, especially for sports activities and competitive sports. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall and good at the school and local level. Efforts to promote equal opportunities are satisfactory and the school has rigorous procedures to eliminate all forms of discrimination.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry to nursery is below that typical for the children's age. Children make satisfactory progress from the time they enter the Nursery. Progress in developing personal, social and emotional skills is good and children have broadly average skills in this area of learning on leaving Reception. However, attainment is still below average for their age by the time they enter Year 1, especially in literacy and numeracy skills. Children work and play together well. They enjoy using their imagination to which adults respond well. For example, when encouraged to play in a 'winter wonderland' role play area, children expressed an interest in learning and playing around the theme of penguins which adults supported with stimulating activities and resources. Assessment of children's progress is satisfactory and there has been recent improvement in the implementation of systems to record information and use it for further planning. Teaching is satisfactory and beginning to improve with direction from the new team leader. Planning includes a suitable range of opportunities to help children develop early literacy and numeracy skills although activities are occasionally not challenging enough for some of the most-able children. Provision for children's welfare, and the links with homes, pre-school and the private nursery are good. Leaders have a secure grasp of weaknesses in provision and have initiated improvements, although the impact of these are at an early stage.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A small number of questionnaires were returned and in these, parents and carers are generally positive in their views. A small number feel that the school does not meet the specific needs of their children. Inspectors found that the school does meet pupils' needs, and, furthermore, that this is improving. A small number of parents and carers also feel that their children's progress is not fast enough and that they are not adequately informed about progress. Inspectors found that a few pupils did not make enough progress, and have identified this as an area for improvement. However, inspectors found that the school has good strategies to make sure all parents and carers have opportunities to find how well their children are doing.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nursery Hill 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	70	7	26	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	67	9	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	44	13	48	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	52	11	41	1	4	1	4
The teaching is good at this school	15	56	12	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	48	12	44	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	59	11	41	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)	15	56	11	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	52	9	33	3	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	52	10	37	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	41	13	48	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	59	10	37	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	48	12	44	1	4	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nursery Hill Primary School, Nuneaton, CV10 0PY

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school. You gave us a lot of good information and helped us to judge that your school is satisfactory. These are some of the reasons for this decision:

- you make satisfactory progress
- teaching is satisfactory and there are many activities to interest you which help you enjoy school
- the headteacher, staff and governors work hard to help the school improve
- you are right to say the school is safe
- your behaviour is good and you are considerate towards each other
- you know how to stay healthy and almost all of you take part in physical activities and eat healthily
- you carry out any responsibilities you have well
- the school takes good care of you, in school and in the before- and after-school club.

In order for the school to be even better, we are asking your teachers to do the following things:

- improve your progress by making sure work is always hard enough, and that you know what level you are working at now so that you know how much you have to do to reach your targets
- improve your standards in writing by making sure you spell accurately, write about your knowledge and understanding in clear, detailed sentences, and learn a wide range of words which you use precisely
- reduce absence by making sure everyone knows how important high levels of attendance are in order for you to do well at school.

You can help by asking if you think work is too easy, make sure you know how well you are doing, and work hard to improve your writing. If you are absent, remember, you are likely to do better if you attend school more often.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley

Lead inspector

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