

Nassington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121847
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	359098
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou HMI

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Bell
Headteacher	Lorraine Allen
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed the five teachers who were teaching at the time of the inspection. Meetings were held with a member of the governing body, staff and pupils, and an inspector spoke to some parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and the arrangements in place to safeguard pupils, and they looked at the school's improvement plan and its self-evaluation, as well as assessment and tracking data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress. Questionnaire returns from 61 parents and carers were analysed as well as returns from pupils and staff.

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

- How well do pupils achieve in writing and mathematics and to what extent is the school accelerating the progress of more-able pupils?
- To what extent has the school improved assessment since its last inspection?
- To what extent do the headteacher and governing body monitor the progress of pupils and the performance of staff?
- What measures have been taken since the school's last inspection to improve outdoor resources and learning opportunities for children in the Reception Year?

Information about the school

This is a small school and most pupils are of White British heritage. Other pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. There are four classes and two are of mixed age. Children in the Reception class are taught alongside a small number of Year 1 pupils and there is a class for Years 1 and 2. The other two classes are single aged for Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of most schools, although a much lower than average percentage currently has a statement of special educational needs. The main areas of additional need include pupils with moderate or specific learning difficulties. The school has been accredited with the National Sports Mark and has Healthy Schools status.

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

Nassington provides a good education and has improved well since its last inspection. Pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 4 and achieve well. The pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in high attendance rates, good behaviour and warm relationships. The very large majority of parents and carers have expressed their satisfaction, many paying tribute to what they have rightly called a caring and committed staff team. For example, typical comments include, 'We are extremely happy with the school and staff' and 'There is a healthy balance between encouraging the children to do well and developing qualities such as self-esteem and social skills.' The pupils have stated that they enjoy learning and playing with others. For example, one commented, 'I love coming to school because everyone is so friendly,' a view that others share.

Since the last inspection, the headteacher and governing body have skilfully guided the school and built on its previous success to raise standards and improve the teaching. The pace of learning in the Reception class is good and there have been significant improvements to outdoor resources which benefit the children very well when learning and playing outside. Nearly all of the teaching is good across the school and some is outstanding. The teachers adapt lessons well for each year group in mixed-age classes, especially when support staff are used efficiently to teach groups. However, in all classes, opportunities are missed to extend learning or deepen the understanding of more-able pupils. The teachers assess pupils' work diligently to plan their lessons, although the information collected is not always checked regularly enough to ensure that they all pupils reach their targets when expected. Lessons are practical, engaging and productive, and pupils offer and generate ideas willingly. However, some lessons do not leave sufficient time for pupils to reflect or assess their own learning in order to gain a better understanding of the next steps they need to take, or time to learn independently through trial and error.

Mathematics standards have improved well because pupils are often provided with challenging problem-solving tasks. This was seen to good effect when pupils in Year 4 applied their knowledge of measures and scale to calculate perimeters when investigating forest trails on maps. Although overall assessments for English are typically above average, those for writing have been comparatively weaker. For example, last year's assessments show that attainment in reading was high and writing standards, although improved on previous years, were average. There are too few opportunities for pupils to edit or correct their independent writing or apply their excellent reading and language skills to write at greater length.

The school council, buddies, monitors and helpers work successfully to support and represent other pupils. The curriculum is well planned to incorporate themes and link subjects. It includes a good range of activities that help pupils to care for the environment

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and adopt healthy lifestyles. For example, pupils grow vegetables to share with the community when contributing to the local church for the annual harvest festival. They are encouraged, with great success, to re-cycle and make productive use of waste materials. The pupils keep fit and active by participating in an excellent range of sports and activities and many also walk or cycle to school. The pupils feel very safe and secure in school and trust the adults who are there to look after them.

Development planning is based on accurate self-evaluation, although the governing body and headteacher do not audit and review the performance of pupils and staff regularly enough, resulting in some variations in progress and performance. The school's track record in meeting challenging targets, in sustaining improvement and addressing key priorities for development demonstrates its good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to write more extensively across a broader range of subjects and topics
 - providing more varied writing tasks in lessons, including note taking and independent extended writing, and time for pupils to edit and improve their writing.
- Improve the way teachers use assessments of pupils' progress and performance to adapt their teaching better to the needs of all pupils by:
 - incorporating more tasks and activities that are matched to the needs of more-able pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to assess their work and time to practise and reflect on their learning, to deepen their understanding.
- Monitor and evaluate pupils' progress, work and lessons more frequently and systematically, to ensure that all pupils reach their expected learning targets.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most children join the Reception year with skills and aptitudes that are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress, reflecting good quality and focused support, which is especially effective with their reading and language development. For all pupils, there have been good improvements to attainment in English, particularly in reading, but progress in writing has been uneven over the last three years. Although average and improving, attainment in writing reflects inconsistencies across classes in the opportunities which pupils have to edit, take notes or improve their confidence to write at length, independently and accurately.

The pupils behave well, including those at risk of displaying challenging behaviour, as a result of the effective support provided by the teaching assistants. The pupils respect each other's views and they are attentive, responsive and keen to ask questions. They show initiative, but do not always have enough opportunities to work independently in lessons or reflect on their learning. 'Talk partners' are used well to help pupils generate ideas, but

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the tasks they are given are sometimes superficial and do not deepen their understanding by developing or extending their ideas further. The pupils feel very safe and many have stated that they trust that adults will deal effectively with rare incidents of bullying. They know that their efforts are valued and rewarded through special celebrations of achievement such as 'golden time'. The pupils contribute extremely well to their community through links with the local church and with other partner schools. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils have good opportunities to engage with the local village and learn about cultural and religious diversity through projects and religious education, but do not have direct, first-hand experience or understanding of the range of minority ethnic communities that exist in Britain today.

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	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1
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?

The curriculum is, increasingly, becoming creative. It provides good opportunities for pupils to research and combine skills learned in, for example, information and communication technology when writing newspaper reports or when applying geography skills during visits to the local village. The teachers combine subjects through special enrichment projects and themes that broaden pupils' experiences and evoke interest and curiosity. Music and the creative arts combine well as pupils appreciate different artistic styles and techniques or improve their design skills when using waste materials to make

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musical instruments. Also, the pupils have good opportunities to learn to speak French, which improves their confidence in speaking and listening.

The pupils respond positively to their teachers' expectations and are enthusiastic learners. In the most effective lessons, teaching assistants are deployed to teach particular groups with well-focused work that meets the pupils' specific learning needs. In some lessons, learning objectives are not sufficiently ambitious for more-able pupils, which slows their progress towards higher levels. The teachers have adopted good systems to assess and check pupils' work and mark books diligently. However, assessments are not always linked consistently enough across classes to levels of attainment or targets to help pupils understand the next stages of their learning.

The school provides excellent pastoral care, guidance and support for pupils and the staff are particularly skilled at supporting pupils potentially in need of additional help, which is having a very good impact on the pupils' personal development, welfare and achievement.

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 school's good performance is evidence of the success of its leadership in raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. The governing body supports the school well, fulfils all its statutory duties competently and efficiently and is increasingly involved in evaluating the performance of pupils and staff. There is still scope for the governing body to undertake more regular reviews and checks on the school's performance. The headteacher has established a manageable balance between her teaching commitment and time to monitor pupils' work which has helped the school to accurately identify priorities for improvement and report these to the governing body. Consequently, there are firm foundations from which the staff and governing body can move forwards. Refined assessment systems have contributed well to improving teachers' planning and shared meetings, which have been used to look at pupils' work, have improved teachers' understanding of attainment levels. However, reviews of pupils' progress are not regular enough to ensure that all pupils reach their learning targets, although recent results show significant improvement, demonstrating the teachers' increasing knowledge and use of assessment.

The school engages well with parents and carers and its community, which accounts for the very good level of satisfaction expressed in the responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaires. A small number of parents and carers would like the school to respond more to their suggestions, although the school provides a good range of workshops and meetings. There is a commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity, reflected most

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in the sensitive care and management of pupils whose circumstances deem they need additional support. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion, particularly in its own village and, to a lesser extent, enables pupils to learn about world religions and different cultural traditions in the wider community. The teachers and teaching assistants monitor the performance of pupils from different backgrounds well, including those from minority ethnic groups, and the information is being used to help them respond to any particular language or learning needs.

At the time of the inspection all safeguarding requirements were being met exceptionally well and are fully compliant with statutory requirements. There are robust arrangements to ensure that only suitable adults come into contact with pupils.

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	1
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 manage and provide a good range of stimulating and varied resources and activities for children in the Reception Year. Children settle quickly into routines and make a good contribution when tidying away or helping others. The staff are vigilant in ensuring that there is a good balance between those activities the children choose for themselves and those directed by adults. The children explore and develop their spoken language well during role-play and when dressing up as characters in stories. They improve their understanding of numbers and shapes when counting and building towers with plastic blocks. They improve their knowledge of the natural world when observing the movement of worms when digging and investigating local habitats. The staff pose interesting tasks and questions but do not always deepen children's understanding through more extended questioning or additional challenging tasks. Regular observations and assessments of the children are recorded by adults to help them evaluate how well the children are doing. These assessments are useful, but often record what the children are doing rather than

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what they are learning. This omission limits opportunities for the staff to accurately assess children's progress and plan tasks that will move the children more rapidly towards higher levels. The children feel very safe and enjoy sharing resources and talking with others, which successfully develops their social and communication skills. There is a very good focus on helping the children to make healthy and active choices when eating fruit or talking about different foods and through opportunities to ride tricycles and other wheeled toys. The children write, paint or draw independently, helping them to make good progress in early reading, writing and communication, especially when linking letters and sounds to names and common words in stories.

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

Nearly all parents and carers returned inspection questionnaires and the very large majority of these were mainly positive about the school and what it offers their children. Most parents and carers are very pleased with the care and attention their children receive. Inspection findings support these positive views. A small number of parents and carers would like more-able pupils to do better and for the school to help involve parents and carers in their children's learning. The inspection found that some more-able pupils just fall short of their targets, especially in writing. Inspection judgements agree with the large majority of parents and carers that the staff and governing body are responsive to parents' and carers' views through workshops and meetings that update parents and carers about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nassington 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	72	16	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	75	14	23	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	46	28	46	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	43	27	44	4	7	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	31	51	20	33	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	46	23	38	9	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	67	20	33	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)	29	48	27	44	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	44	20	33	8	13	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	61	17	28	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	46	21	34	7	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	52	17	28	5	8	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	57	20	33	5	8	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.



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nassington Primary School, Peterborough, PE8 6QG

The inspectors really enjoyed meeting and talking to you, as well as observing you in lessons during your recent inspection. Nassington is a good school. We were pleased to see you behave well and try hard. Your work, particularly the recent ECO work, is displayed very well in classrooms and shows how much you are learning to care for your community and the environment. The inspectors were particularly impressed with the way you are using waste materials to make interesting things. The African shakers in the Reception class and the guitars displayed in other classes are brilliant. You even managed to make models of beautiful tropical birds out of old plastic bottles! You are making an excellent contribution to your community and inspectors were pleased to see the local vicar thanking you for growing vegetables to give to families in and beyond the village during harvest time. Well done. The teaching is good and is helping you to make good progress. Many of you told us that your work is fun because of the opportunities you have to go on visits or learn interesting things, like learning to speak French, and take part in an excellent range of sports. The headteacher, staff and governing body have successfully made improvements since the last time your school was inspected.

Your writing is improving well but inspectors have judged that some of you should be doing better so have asked your teachers to provide you with more opportunities to practise, edit and improve your writing more. We have also asked your teachers to make regular checks and assessments to ensure that all of you reach your learning targets and that, in all lessons, your work is not too easy or hard, yet challenges you all a bit more. Inspectors have also asked the headteacher and governing body to step up the way they check the school, especially lessons and your work, to make sure that both you and your teachers are doing as well as they can and to especially make sure that you all reach your learning targets.

You can all help too by carrying on trying hard and keeping up your excellent attendance by coming to school every day. The inspectors thought that you were all really sensible, so keep it up. I wish you, your parents and carers, staff and the governing body the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Her Majesty's Inspector

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