

St Nicholas Church of England Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125661
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	359918
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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	397
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Roote
Headteacher	Louise Mohacsi
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed and 15 teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, parents and carers, a group of pupils, senior managers and middle leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, monitoring information, policies and 221 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- What proportion of pupils exceeds the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics?
- How effectively do marking, target-setting and pupils' evaluations of their own learning help raise pupils' achievement?
- How effectively do leaders use robust monitoring, evaluation and improvement systems to evaluate and improve the progress made by different groups of pupils?

Information about the school

The school is bigger than the average primary school. Most pupils are White British and the others are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school has gained the Eco-schools silver award, the International School award and Healthy Schools status.

A privately run nursery operates in the same building as the school. This is separately inspected.

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

This is a good school. It provides a welcoming and happy environment in which pupils thrive and want to do their best. Lessons are calm and orderly, and pupils show mature and conscientious attitudes to their learning. A variety of high quality support systems within the school and close liaison with external agencies help ensure that all pupils, especially those most vulnerable, are cared for exceptionally well. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and this is shown in their consistently high levels of attendance. They work together extremely well, and even the youngest children show a good level of independence. Pupils are polite and well-mannered and show a high degree of respect and concern for others. Relationships are strong and help pupils feel very safe and secure. Parents and carers are very positive in their views of the school and many praise the care and support provided for their children.

All groups of pupils achieve well throughout the school because teaching is good. Occasionally, it is outstanding. In those lessons where pupils' learning is only satisfactory, it is mainly because teachers are not clear enough about what they want pupils to learn in lessons, and some pupils are not guided well enough through the small steps which help ensure effective learning. Teachers mark books regularly and praise pupils when they try hard. However, although some marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve, this is inconsistent. Pupils have targets for learning, but most pupils do not know what they are and it is not always made clear to pupils how their work in lessons will help them to achieve their targets.

The impact of the headteacher's leadership has been considerable, particularly in driving up levels of attainment and accelerating progress. Since the last inspection, senior leaders have worked effectively to strengthen teaching across the school. Strategies implemented to help ensure that teachers accurately assess pupils' achievement have largely been successful, but the accuracy of teachers' assessments is still inconsistent. Improved systems for tracking pupils' progress have increased teachers' accountability and helped ensure that pupils who are falling behind are identified early and given additional support. However, leaders do not use the pupil attainment and progress information rigorously enough to check on the achievement of groups of pupils and measure the effectiveness of the various whole-school planned initiatives on raising pupils' achievement. The middle leaders are relatively new to the role and their monitoring and evaluation skills are not sufficiently developed for them to make a significant contribution to raising pupils' achievement. Senior leaders and the governing body share an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and amply demonstrate good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons and carefully guide all pupils through the small steps which help them to learn effectively
 - improving the quality of marking and target-setting so that they have a greater impact on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that all assessments of pupils' achievements are accurate.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - using the pupil attainment and progress information more rigorously to check on the achievement of groups of pupils and measure the effectiveness of the various whole-school planned initiatives on raising pupils' achievement
 - improving the monitoring and evaluation skills of the middle leaders.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and show concentration and enthusiasm for their work. They work hard and apply themselves well to their tasks. They work together well and are very willing to share their ideas and help others when necessary. From starting points which are expected for their age, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are prepared well for their future learning. Boys and girls continue to achieve well in Key Stages 1 and 2, and their attainment when they leave at the end of Year 6 is above average. Due to improved teaching since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils who exceed the levels expected for their age is rising and, in all year groups, it is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported. Individual learning programmes, along with skilled and sensitive support from staff, ensure their good progress.

Pupils are very proud of their school and they are keen to contribute towards its success by acting as play leaders and school council members. They show a keen interest in their community, especially through links with the church and collecting money and resources for local charities, such as the Salvation Army homelessness project. Pupils have a very secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe, both in and outside school. They say that bullying is extremely rare but if it does occur it is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and a well developed sense of their own cultural heritage. They are able to reflect well on their own experiences and those of others, especially through the links with schools in South Africa and France. Pupils' well-developed personal qualities, in conjunction with their above average basic skills and high attendance, prepare them well for the future.

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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	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	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	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?

Strong relationships between teachers and pupils, and good class management, are evident in most classes and contribute to the positive climate for learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support small groups of pupils with specially targeted work and to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are guided well in whole-class lessons. However, they do not always spend enough time working with the pupils to stimulate their learning and provide guidance when needed.

Pupils are beginning to develop the skills of evaluating their own learning in lessons. However, in those lessons where teachers do not make it clear to pupils what they want them to learn, pupils do not effectively evaluate their learning. Marking and target-setting vary in quality. Where they are most effective, marking gives pupils very clear advice on how to improve and pupils understand how their learning in lessons is helping them to move towards their targets.

The curriculum provides a wide range of enrichment activities, including many visits to places of interest. The visit to the Somme and pupils leading a Remembrance assembly add greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Visits to a mosque and gurdwara and visits from musicians, artists and parents and carers from different cultures add to pupils' cultural development.

The school pays excellent attention to all aspects of the care, guidance and support of pupils. Teachers and leaders know pupils exceptionally well and freely give time for pupils

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to discuss with them any concerns and anxieties. Effective links with the pre-school providers, good induction arrangements when pupils first join the Early Years Foundation Stage and strong links with the secondary schools help pupils quickly settle into their new communities. Exceptionally effective links with external agencies help support those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially most vulnerable.

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's commitment to improving the outcomes for all pupils is clearly shown in her enthusiasm and dedication. The governing body and staff work closely together. They are all immensely proud of the school, share a common sense of direction and show a determination to continue the improvements already underway. Although the governing body supports the school well and has a good overview of outcomes and provision, it cannot fully hold the school to account because senior leaders do not provide it with information to show the achievement of different groups of pupils. The recently appointed middle leaders provide professional support and guidance to their colleagues which helps improve the quality of the provision and they are beginning to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work in their areas for responsibility. However, their whole-school evaluation skills are limited in identifying, in detail, the main areas for improvement and bring about rapid change in all areas of relative weakness. Whole-school and subject development plans are helping provide direction for improvement. However, the criteria for success are not focused on measurable outcomes for pupils and, consequently, the impact of new initiatives on raising pupils' achievement are not incisively evaluated.

Parents' and carers' views are canvassed and valued. The very large majority express a high degree of confidence in the school leadership and almost all say that they are very happy with their children's experiences at school. The outstanding level of support and guidance given to all pupils, especially those experiencing learning or emotional difficulties, and the steadily rising attendance, shows the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the local communities and, through links with schools further afield, visits to places of worship and work in many areas of the curriculum, pupils gain a good understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures. At the time of the inspection, the required safeguarding checks had been undertaken by the school, child protection arrangements were secure and risk assessments had been completed and regularly reviewed for all relevant activities. Staff had received good quality training and had good

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knowledge of safeguarding procedures. The few minor aspects regarding health and safety were reported to the governing body and the headteacher.

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

Relationships between adults and children are strong and staff have a very good range of skills to manage children's behaviour. Children enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure in a caring and supportive environment. They work and play well together and enjoy their learning. Because of consistently good teaching and a curriculum which provides a great variety of stimulating and exciting activities, children make good progress. This is especially the case in reading and calculating in mathematics. Occasionally, children's learning is slower because the work they are given is not accurately matched to their needs. The outdoor area is used very well to provide children with experiences in all areas of learning. Children behave well, grow in confidence and develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy.

Parents and carers are welcomed as partners in their children's education. Strong links with external support agencies help the adults know the children very well. This helps ensure that children's learning, emotional and welfare needs are identified and accommodated from the start. The teamwork of the staff is strong. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader uses monitoring and evaluation skills well to identify areas of relative weakness and successfully implement strategies for improvement.

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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

The proportion of questionnaire responses received from parents and carers was much higher than in most other primary school inspections. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire or who spoke with the inspectors were happy with their children's experiences at school. A few comment that they feel that their suggestions and concerns are not taken account of by the school. This was raised with the senior leaders and governing body who said that they were already aware of this through the school's own survey and had plans to improve upon all aspects of communication.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Nicholas CofE Community 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 221 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 397 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	126	57	87	39	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	162	73	56	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	94	43	124	56	3	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	104	47	105	48	9	4	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	114	52	105	48	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	94	43	119	54	5	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	99	45	115	52	5	2	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)	106	48	93	42	5	2	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	100	45	112	51	9	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	88	40	111	50	11	5	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	28	132	60	12	5	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	109	49	104	47	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	127	57	90	41	2	1	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Nicholas CofE Community Primary School, Kenilworth, CV8 2PE

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us. You go to a good school where you make good progress and everyone cares for you extremely well. It was a delight to talk to you and see you in your lessons. We were pleased to find that you know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe. We were very pleased to see the sensible way you behave around school, and we liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. You were all very polite to us and very well-mannered.

The teachers are very kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best. You obviously enjoy coming to school very much and your parents and carers do a good job getting you to school regularly and on time.

To help the school become even better, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that:

- teachers are very clear about what they want you to learn in lessons and plan very carefully those small steps which help you learn well
- the teachers' marking and your targets for improvement help you to improve your work even more
- all leaders and managers in the school keep a careful check on the progress that you are all making so that you all achieve even better.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and making sure that you understand how to achieve your targets.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Her Majesty's Inspector

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