

Nursling Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 116303 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 357935 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 May 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Janet Simms |

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

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|--|--|
| 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 | 211 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ian Scott |
| Headteacher | Lorina Smith |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 November 2007 |
| School address | Nursling Street Nursling, Southampton SO16 0XH |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed parts of 11 lessons taught by six teachers, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They scrutinised pupils' books, particularly those of Year 6 as this year group was out of school. Inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, with other staff, and with members of the governing body. Inspectors talked to three groups of pupils formally, with many others in lessons and around the school and to some parents and carers. They observed pupils at play and at lunchtime, attended assemblies and observed other activities. The inspection team scrutinised school documentation, including governing body minutes, school development plans, assessment records, documents relating to safeguarding and school monitoring, and attendance data. They analysed 74 parents' and carers' questionnaires and those from staff and pupils.

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

- The achievement of current year groups, particularly Years 5 and 6, and whether the current quality of teaching is raising standards and generating consistently good progress across the school.
- The effectiveness of senior and middle leaders in improving pupils' performance in mathematics.
- The school's progress in improving all aspects of assessment, and how well marking and guidance help pupils understand what to do to improve their work.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school serving the village of Nursling, with about a third of pupils coming from adjacent areas of Southampton. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased recently and is above average. Most of these needs relate to moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very few speak English as an additional language. At the time of inspection, Year 6 pupils were out of school on a residential course. There have been several changes in staffing recently. Among the school's recent awards are Healthy Schools status and the Activemark.

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 which retains its many strengths from the previous inspection. These include aspects such as pupils' excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and their valuable contributions to the school and local community which are also excellent. Much of this arises from outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school so they behave very well and develop extremely positive attitudes towards learning. Attendance is high and good safeguarding procedures mean that pupils feel exceptionally safe and secure.

Strong school leadership has resulted in significant improvement in governance which is now outstanding. Effective teamwork among governors and school staff results in incisive self-evaluation of the school's strengths and robust action on areas for improvement. Good monitoring has led to improvement in the quality of teaching but there are still some inconsistencies between classes, so pupils' progress in lessons sometimes varies. Senior staff and governors tackled a sharp deceleration in pupils' achievement in Years 5 and 6, so that recent satisfactory progress is now good. A range of well-targeted strategies has resulted in greatly improved performance and a significant rise in standards. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they achieve well and their attainment, as indicated by past national indicators and current work, is above average. Year 5 pupils achieve very well from much lower starting points, and the school's recent focus on improving mathematics learning has led to pupils making better progress this year. These successes demonstrate senior leaders' good capacity to improve the school further.

Good curriculum planning has created an interesting variety of experiences in lessons and beyond, which pupils find 'great fun', enjoying the active ways they participate in learning. This is because good teaching places pupils' enjoyment at the heart of all staff planning. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy and achieve equally well. Support staff provide valuable contributions to all pupils' learning. Marking and written guidance have improved, but the school recognises that good practice in English is less evident in other subjects, and that pupils' subsequent work does not always show improved outcomes. Secure school development planning identifies key areas to improve, but senior leaders do not always ensure these filter down to guide specific policies such as marking, where expectations are not always clear. Strong personal development leads to pupils feeling confident that they 'can do' things and achieve well. Their moral and social development is excellent and their cultural understanding good. Pupils show good ability to be still and think quietly in prayer in assemblies, but although behaviour is good this attribute is not harnessed in most lessons to provide opportunity to reflect on ideas before pupils talk or act.

Good leadership and management have resolved most recent teaching weaknesses but senior leaders recognise there are still areas where it can improve further. Outstanding

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partnerships, including those with parents and carers, create an atmosphere where all feel welcomed into a very harmonious community which contributes well to community cohesion locally and beyond.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching through the school by:
 - extending the good practice in English assessment and marking into other subjects
 - raising staff expectations that pupils will demonstrate improvements in their work as a result of written advice and guidance
 - maximising opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect on their learning and others' ideas.
- Establish sharper links between school development priorities and policies such as that for teachers' marking and define clearer criteria against which senior leaders can monitor performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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|----------|
| 2 |
|----------|

Current work of Year 6 confirms school assessments which show very good 'catch-up' learning this year after weaker performance for many when they were in Year 5. Year 6 pupils reach above average attainment, particularly in mathematics. There is good achievement for most pupils including the very small minority of pupils who speak English as an additional language, only varying when teachers move groups on too slowly, or miss chances to embed understanding, particularly in English in Years 3 and 4. Progress in mathematics is more consistent. In a Year 1 lesson pupils made good progress in understanding two-dimensional shapes, using vocabulary well to explain spatial features. In a Year 2 English lesson, learning intentions were understood well, and pupils' excellent attitudes and cooperation led to excited discussion about a journey 'behind the door' and subsequently to good, imaginative story writing. In some subjects, such as project work, pupils' presentation and secretarial writing skills are not consistently developed to best effect.

Relationships with staff and between pupils themselves are a great strength, so learning occurs in a happy, supportive atmosphere where pupils feel confident to try things out. In Year 5, for instance, pupils were working together rather than in their mixed Years 5 and 6 sets. They were very actively engaged and learning well in a project about sound, linking science and English together very effectively. Pupils were excited as they learned through discovery, and extremely keen to explain their work and findings to inspectors later on. Groups working with support staff in these and other lessons made good progress in core skills and social development. High standards in physical education, music and art add significantly to pupils' well-balanced development and to their cultural understanding. Strong outcomes in their personal development are exemplified by many pupils' excellent contributions to the school, as 'learning detectives', for instance, where pupils research how others feel about the school, and through the Enterprise group, which designs and sells products to raise money for different purposes. Opportunities to contribute to the school council and to care for others as mentors and mediators, together

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with good basic skills, all contribute to the positive outcomes which prepare pupils well for the next phase of their education and beyond.

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?

Good teaching is characterised in this school by imaginative planning to meet the needs of different groups, using good progress tracking information and targeting support staff very effectively. In a well-planned curriculum, staff use information and communication technology well to inspire research, and basic resources such as string and plastic cups, which facilitated good investigation into how sound travels in a Year 5 science experiment. Staff encourage pupils to develop curiosity and express ideas, successfully developing their confidence. The pace of lessons is good, but some opportunities are missed to exploit pupils' capacity for quiet thinking and reflection to consolidate and extend these aspects of learning. Staff explain learning objectives well, with frequent checking for learning throughout lessons which makes it easy for pupils to understand what they are learning and why. Occasionally, though, teachers do not act on pupils' signals about their lack of understanding. Similarly, pupils do not always act on teachers' written advice about how to improve work, even in English, where marking is better. The school provides a wide range of responsibilities which pupils eagerly grasp, so many become outstanding ambassadors in areas such as health promotion. These pupils were very keen that inspectors watched the excellent animated DVD they had made. Excellent care, guidance

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and support include pupils and staff in making sure all are happy, safe and secure. Pupils are confident that the many opportunities to express their views through 'chatter-boxes', via the school council, or to the 'learning detectives' will be listened to and taken seriously.

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?

Staff, parents, carers and governors fully share senior leaders' high aspirations for the school, working in very effective teams and partnerships to achieve them. The governing body has been particularly successful in helping develop strategic direction and overcoming staffing difficulties. Senior staff set very challenging targets for pupils' achievement, which they are meeting or exceeding this year. Staff have been partly successful in improving their teaching, but realise that good teaching can get even better. The headteacher's skills have been used well to help other schools and provide good staff development. All staff are strongly committed to equality of opportunity for everyone and evaluate the progress of different groups well. Any flagging achievement is quickly recognised and tackled. Development planning is well targeted, but senior leaders do not always embed shorter term objectives such as improvement in mathematics this year, into school policies. This limits the extent to which they can monitor outcomes in areas such as written marking. In other respects, self-evaluation is accurate and well-focused. Parents and carers appreciate the approachability and openness of all staff, knowing that any difficulties will be resolved. Good safeguarding procedures are key to pupils feeling extremely safe and secure. Outstanding partnerships, such as work with the local schools 'cluster', with parents and carers and others in the local and wider world, show the school playing a strong part in community cohesion, with its international links strengthening rapidly because of specific focus in its new curriculum.

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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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| 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

Children's starting points on entry to Reception vary, but are generally weaker than usual for children of this age in aspects of English, especially writing. They make good progress in all aspects of learning, but writing remains comparatively weak when they move to Year 1. Emerging number skills develop securely. Good provision for children of different abilities leads to all making similarly good progress. They develop good social skills in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Outside accommodation has improved significantly since the previous inspection, providing a sheltered, stimulating extension to the relatively cramped classroom. Teaching is consistently good, with well-planned lessons promoting good, all-round development of children's skills by all staff. Through an interesting, well-balanced curriculum, children develop the confident attitudes which serve them well later in the school, but planning sometimes misses opportunities for developing writing skills, particularly those of boys. More-able children's extended thinking is not always fully exploited through the use of deeper staff questioning. Excellent journals of children's 'learning journeys' provide a very good mechanism for communication with parents and carers, with whom relationships are very strong. Good management includes outstandingly effective strategies for assessing children's progress and very effective teamwork between staff.

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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

An average percentage of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, with only a very small minority of those responding indicating disagreements. Of those making positive additional comments, several were about the high reputation of the school within its community and about the good quality of leadership and management. Others commended the accessibility and friendly responses from teaching and support staff and praised the care taken to meet children's individual needs. There was much expression reflecting pupils' generally happiness at the school. The very few who made critical comments related largely to individual issues and were discussed anonymously with senior staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nursling Church of England 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 49 | 72 | 18 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 54 | 79 | 14 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 45 | 66 | 20 | 29 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 39 | 57 | 25 | 37 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 41 | 60 | 26 | 38 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 39 | 57 | 27 | 40 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 44 | 65 | 24 | 35 | 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) | 35 | 51 | 28 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 37 | 54 | 28 | 41 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 35 | 51 | 29 | 43 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 37 | 54 | 25 | 37 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 41 | 60 | 24 | 35 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 47 | 69 | 18 | 26 | 3 | 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 | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nursling Church of England Primary School, Southampton SO16 0XH

Thank you very much for your kind welcome when we came to your school for the inspection. We were very pleased to talk to many of you. I am writing to tell you what we found out during our visit.

Yours is a good school which has some significant strengths. These include the excellent development of your understanding about how to keep healthy, fit and safe, and we were very pleased to watch the great DVD which some of you have made about healthy living. Your progress in English and mathematics is good throughout the school and Year 6 standards are above average. We were very impressed with the contributions you make to the school through being 'learning detectives' and other very useful jobs. Your attendance is high and you behave well, because, as you told us, you 'love coming to school'. Pupils told us very clearly about how safe and secure you feel, and your parents and carers agree. This is because all adults in the school look after you very well and provide outstanding care, guidance and support. They work very effectively in partnership with other people to make sure you enjoy your work and achieve well. Teaching is good and adults prepare an interesting variety of things for you to learn in lessons. We were pleased that you find learning such fun. Staff know clearly how well all of you are progressing and senior staff and governors take very effective action if your progress slows down.

Even in a good school like this, there are things we have asked the school to do to improve it. Teachers often give you good tips about how to improve your work in English, and we have asked them to do this in more subjects so that teaching is consistent through the school. We have asked them to make sure you do as they suggest, to help yourselves to improve and show them this improvement. We have asked senior leaders to make things like this clearer to staff in school policies, too. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities in lessons to think quietly about ideas, like you do in some assemblies. We think you will be able to do this well, which will help you sort out ideas and improve your learning even more.

Yours sincerely

Janet Simms

Lead inspector

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