

Niton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118165
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	358275
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Ward
Headteacher	Ingrid Ramsdale - Capper
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited twelve lessons and observed six teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and a number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken with. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and data from monitoring, as well as a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 82 parents and carers, 69 pupils and 19 staff.

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

- The extent to which the governing body fulfils its statutory duties, especially with regard to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Whether girls achieve as well as boys.
- How effectively the school is raising attainment in writing generally, and for boys in particular, in reading.

Information about the school

Niton is a small village primary school serving a rural community. Due to the local authority's re-organisation into two-tier provision the number on roll has increased significantly over the last year. At the time of the inspection, there were no Year 6 pupils enrolled at the school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with very few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. These mainly relate to speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school holds a number of awards including Investors in People, Healthy School and the Eco-school Silver award as well as the Quality Mark and Activemark.

The Sunrise Sunset Club offers childcare facilities during term time. It is privately managed and was not inspected by this inspection team.

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

2

Main findings

Niton Primary is a satisfactory school. Whilst there are significant strengths in some aspects of provision, particularly teaching and the curriculum, others, particularly those related to the level of care, are not as good as they could be and this has meant that there is considerable variation in pupil outcomes. A greater number of parents and carers, and pupils than is normally seen in primary schools expressed concerns about safeguarding arrangements. In the course of the inspection inspectors investigated an issue raised by parents and carers. Evidence indicates that the policies, procedures and monitoring of the safeguarding of pupils currently meet statutory requirements and that the school has acted appropriately in response to the concerns raised. Inspectors also note that the governing body is instituting a more regular monitoring programme, included unannounced visits, in order to help pre-empt any safeguarding concerns in the future. The school has very successfully raised pupils' awareness of how to keep themselves safe, but given the views expressed by a small but significant number of pupils in their questionnaires, the important outcome regarding the extent to which pupils feel safe is only satisfactory.

Outcomes related to pupils' enjoyment of school and academic achievement are outstanding because of excellent teaching and a curriculum which is exceptionally well adjusted to meet the needs and interests of the pupils. Consequently, progress is excellent for both boys and girls and groups at risk of underachieving. The quality of writing and boys' reading has improved especially well, with attainment by Year 5 being much higher than normally seen for pupils of this age. Pupils exhibit a strong commitment to learning when in school and are generally well prepared for the future but attendance levels are broadly average, mainly due to families taking term time holidays, and this depresses the extent to which this small minority are developing the skills they will need in later life. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and the local and wider communities, Spiritual and moral development are good, with social development a significant strength. Pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility and relationships are excellent. During lessons behaviour is usually exemplary although playtimes are occasionally affected by boisterous behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and ways of life, including those overseas, but their knowledge of cultural diversity in this country is less well developed.

Excellent procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching have helped staff and the governing body to improve both significantly since the last inspection. Partly as a result of the strong focus on this, less has been done to build on the strengths seen in other aspects of pupils' development and to improve important areas such as raising attendance levels. However, past successes show that the school is successfully bringing about improvement in targeted areas, giving it a good capacity to improve further.

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About 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To ensure all pupils feel safe at all times, sharpen governors' oversight of the implementation of all policies, but particularly those relating to safeguarding by:
 - improving the systems and regularly checking how effectively staff are implementing the procedures.
- Place a greater focus on improving all aspects of pupils' personal outcomes in order to help them to develop as well in these areas as they do in 'Enjoying and Achieving' by:
 - raising attendance levels through strongly discouraging term time holidays
 - enhancing pupils' knowledge of the cultural diversity in this country.enhancing pupils' knowledge of the cultural diversity in this country.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' outcomes range from outstanding to satisfactory. The majority of pupils say that they usually feel safe in school although their parents and carers do not always agree. Pupils' knowledge of ways in which to keep safe is secure. For example, younger pupils have a very good understanding of sun safety as a result of their being encouraged to contribute to the review of the school's policy. Older pupils helped to update the school travel plan and considered the safety of playground resources which they helped to choose. Pupils' good behaviour makes a very strong contribution to their learning. They very quickly respond to the expectations of staff and generally behave considerately towards others. Pupils have a good awareness of how to eat healthily. They very much enjoy the regular walks and other opportunities for physical activity and are well aware of the importance of exercise. However, their parents and carers would like more sports activities. Pupils are very proud of their school, and especially of the role it plays in the local community. They support this exceptionally well, for example, campaigning to keep a post office in the village. The 'eco-team' work very effectively to support the wider community and older pupils were delighted to welcome the Chinese delegation to the island last year in Mandarin. All these strengths have been recognised by a number of national awards.

Academically, Reception children get off to an excellent start, with a large majority exceeding the levels expected by the time they move into Year 1. This good attainment is built on exceptionally well throughout the school. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language is outstanding, with the vast majority reaching the levels expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils are very competent in mathematical calculation, applying this successfully in a range of problem solving activities. By Year 5 these strengths help pupils to work especially well with fractions, decimals and measures, and analysing and recording data. They quickly select the correct method and work accurately when solving problems. In reading and writing younger pupils exhibit very strong skills so that they comprehend easily and use language very effectively in their written work. By Year 5 pupils write exceptionally well for a range of purposes and audiences; for example, in the

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diary of their recent residential visit. Older pupils are becoming skilled at carrying out scientific investigations; for example, to discover how fossils are formed. These strengths, together with excellent opportunities for pupils to develop good enterprise skills, help ensure they are well prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
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 level of care and pastoral support is generally satisfactory in providing for pupils' needs. The support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very good, enabling them to achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils' progress is very carefully tracked through excellent assessment procedures so that academic advice and support is strong. Procedures for encouraging good attendance are not always rigorous enough in discouraging term time holidays.

Other aspects of provision are excellent. The curriculum is highly innovative, providing rich and very interesting activities which motivate and engage pupils exceptionally well. The school has been excellent at instilling in pupils a strong awareness of their responsibility for their progress so that they continually reflect on and readjust their work. Older pupils make an excellent contribution to assessment procedures. Marking is very effective, clearly showing pupils how to improve. Individual targets are very challenging and are nearly always met. Teaching is excellent, with the consistent approach benefitting pupils exceptionally well. Staff, including teaching assistants, are highly skilled at explaining new

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things to help pupils understand easily, constantly reviewing how well pupils are doing in order to promote progress throughout lessons. The rich and interesting curriculum is adapted especially well to meet individual needs. Highly tailored programmes and group or one-to-one work quickly help address weaker progress. Lesson activities are especially well adapted to the stages at which different pupils are working. Parents' and carers' support for their children's learning is very good; for example, in the family learning activity they work on together with their children. Enterprise activities; for example, pupils' fund raising to support other communities as part of the rainforest topic, considerably strengthen their social skills and understanding about money. Activities to support pupils' social development are outstanding and special occasions to celebrate a range of cultural and historic events related to a wide range of countries support cultural development well. Very good attention has been given to making children aware of the hazards they may meet outside school, with a strong emphasis on water safety because of the school's proximity to the sea. An excellent range of visits, visitors and special events, for example, through links with the lifeboat service and the local sports partnership, enhances pupils' development especially well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher offers good leadership. Her vision for the school is ambitious and, as a result of her excellent leadership of teaching and development of the curriculum, she has secured consistently high standards for pupils. In this, she has been well supported by her leadership team. Self evaluation is accurate and the school knows its strengths and areas for development. The governing body acknowledges the need to be more vigilant and takes its role in fulfilling statutory requirements seriously, taking action to respond to concerns raised about safeguarding. Important policies and procedures, for example, those related to child protection and the vetting of staff are fully in place. Staff are suitably trained and have the skills and expertise required. The governing body is supporting staff well in the challenges raised through re-organisation, with strong financial management ensuring resources are allocated effectively. Strategies to drive up standards and attainment have been particularly successful. Staff with management responsibilities work very effectively together in the monitoring and evaluation of important priorities. Target setting for academic outcomes is outstanding, but not enough emphasis has been placed on improving pupils' personal development.

Partnerships with other organisations, including those related to safeguarding, are good ensuring that any pupil who needs specific help receives it. Links with other schools and organisations, especially to enhance curriculum enrichment are excellent. For example,

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links with a school in China support pupils' awareness of global diversity work especially well. These, together with the excellent contribution to the community in the local area, help to ensure that community cohesion is good. Steps are being taken to increase pupils' awareness of diversity in this country. The school ensures that discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Although equality of opportunity with regard to academic outcomes is strong, the need for the school to ensure that a few vulnerable pupils are better protected through more regular monitoring means this aspect is judged satisfactory overall.

The school has a productive engagement with parents and carers. The overwhelming majority are happy with their children's experience at the school. Parents and carers are kept well informed. They are regularly updated about their children's progress and have a very good range of opportunities to help support learning at home.

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	1
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	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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close teamwork and a consistent approach throughout the school mean that Reception children also benefit from excellent teaching and an outstanding curriculum. As a result, they make excellent progress across all areas of learning. The leader has an exceptionally good understanding of how younger children learn. Children benefit considerably from highly challenging activities that are very well matched to their individual needs and are really interesting and exciting. For example, during the inspection a small group exhibited great delight in searching for the messages left for them by a 'pirate' giving both word and mathematical clues as to where they could find the treasure. Their excellent social development was evident in the way they shared responsibilities and took turns. Children quickly learn to read and most write well-constructed sentences. They become skilled in adding and subtracting, many using numbers up to 20. Children gain very well-developed physical skills.

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Adults are exceptionally well deployed, including to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and make an excellent contribution to learning.

Very careful thought has been given to the balance between adult-led activities, for example, in learning new letters and sounds and those where children can go off and explore things for themselves. Children love finding out about new things, greatly enjoying the 'welly walks' where they watch birds and identify the bird songs. Due to re-organisation, the current outdoor area is temporary and not easy for staff to supervise. Recently, staff have adjusted arrangements for parents and carers to collect their children safely ensuring that the level of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Other aspects, such as induction and transfer arrangements are good.

The leader exhibits the same commitment to drive up progress and attainment as seen elsewhere in the school. Children's progress and achievements are assessed exceptionally well and this information is shared effectively with parents and carers.

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	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are generally satisfied with the school and agree their children enjoy being there. A very large majority of those responding to the questionnaire agree that they are well informed about their children's progress and that teaching and progress are good. Most parents and carers also agree that they are helped to support their children's learning, that their children are well prepared for the future and they are helped to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Inspection evidence concurs with these views.

Of most concern to those parents and carers who wrote or spoke to inspectors is the level of safeguarding. The inspection team reviewed this aspect of the school's work thoroughly, observing how well staff look after children, looking at documents and speaking to staff and the governing body. Evidence shows that the policies and procedures and the way staff use them to protect children were satisfactory at the time of the inspection. It indicates that the school has acted appropriately in responding to parents' and carers' concerns. However, the school agrees that a more regular programme of monitoring, including unannounced visits by governors, will help pre-empt any concerns parents and carers might have in the future.

Other areas where a small minority of parents and carers raised concerns relate to communication, the amount of sports activities on offer and behaviour. Inspection evidence finds that communication with parents and carers regarding the school's work and their children's progress is good. There is a wide range of physical activities including

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sport although the school notes that some parents and carers would like more for the latter. It also indicates that behaviour is generally good and usually exemplary in lessons so that children's learning is excellent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Niton 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	43	42	51	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	38	38	46	3	4	7	9
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	32	49	60	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	33	34	41	13	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	40	37	45	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	29	45	55	8	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	33	39	48	7	9	3	4
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)	18	22	52	63	4	5	3	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	29	36	44	13	16	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	21	38	46	14	17	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	17	40	49	16	20	6	7
The school is led and managed effectively	21	26	31	38	17	21	7	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	41	35	43	1	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

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.



7 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Niton Primary School, Niton, Ventnor, PO38 2BP

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking with you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We have judged your school to be satisfactory although there are some important strengths in its work.

Here are some of the things we found out were especially good about the school.

- The activities staff provide and the quality of teaching are both excellent.
- You make outstanding progress, and attainment is much higher than that normally seen by the time you leave.
- The methods staff use to assess your work and monitor your progress in important subjects are excellent. You make a very important contribution to this too and work very hard to reach your targets.
- You make an outstanding contribution to school life and that of the island community. We were very impressed that you could welcome some Chinese visitors in their own language.

Here is what we have asked the school to improve.

- Keep a more regular check on how well the strategies they use to keep you safe are working so that all of you can feel safe in school.
- Focus more on helping you to do as well in your personal development as you do in English, mathematics and science. In particular we would like you to find out more about the different cultures in this country and for more of you to avoid going on holiday in term time. You can help by trying just as hard in these areas as you do in your work in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead Inspector

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