

Nettlebed Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123037
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380577
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Day
Headteacher	Bob Worsell
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by six teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, parents and carers and the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' plans, pupils' exercise books, records of pupils' attendance, standards and progress, the school development plan, records on checks of teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to eight questionnaires completed by staff, 47 by pupils and 45 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.

- The achievement of different groups of pupils, but especially the more capable writers in Years 1 and 2.
- The use of information from pupil assessment in teaching in all classes.
- How well subject leaders are involved in monitoring teaching and learning.
- How well the school promotes community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage with a very small minority being of Traveller background. A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average overall. Their needs are mostly associated with speech and language difficulties. There is a privately run pre-school on the school's premises which is managed by a group of parents and carers. This does not form part of the inspection report and will be reported on separately. The school has National Healthy Schools Status and an 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The school offers an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. Right from the start of Reception, children are given memorable and magical learning experiences which give them a passion for learning. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress and attainment is high in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) by the time they leave school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the few who are learning English as an additional language and the small number of Travellers all make excellent progress and have full access to the curriculum. However, pupils' progress in writing is somewhat slower in Years 1 and 2 than it is in the rest of the school. This is because, on occasions, information from assessment is not properly used in teachers' planning so that the more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The school has recognised this as an area for development in its excellent self-evaluation.

Pupils have outstandingly positive attitudes to learning. They behave impeccably in and around the school and genuinely care about one another's welfare. Pupils are excellent ambassadors and make a valuable contribution both to the school community and beyond. The school's motto, 'Reach up and reach out', is reflected in all aspects of school life, especially in the excellent community cohesion. Pupils' avid participation in choral speaking, choir, sport, arts-related pursuits and drama provides them with exceptionally well-rounded learning experiences. Pupils work very well in teams, both in extra-curricular activities and lessons, and this contributes to their outstanding social development. Pupils show excellent knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle which is reflected in the Healthy Schools status and Activemark award; they also engage actively in sustainability issues, particularly gardening and recycling. They have expert knowledge of personal safety and look out for one another at all times.

The cornerstone of the school's success is the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher. He and his highly professional staff provide excellent care, guidance and support for pupils whose needs they know very well. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. 'The only complaint I have is that the school is not open 365 days in a year,' said one delighted parent.

A highly creative curriculum includes whole-school visits to Warburg Nature Reserve and the London Science Museum, as well as visits from parents to talk about their experiences, and these events contribute to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their future economic well-being.

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The governance of the school is good. Governors fulfil all the statutory requirements and are regular visitors to the school, although the recently appointed subject governors do not yet have sufficient information to ask probing questions about the progress of different groups of pupils at classroom level. The school has maintained high levels of attainment over time and has successfully improved in all areas since the last inspection, especially in the quality of teaching. This, together with united staff support for the headteacher's vision for the school, shows an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that information from assessment is continually used to plan tasks that meet the needs of all pupils but especially of the more capable pupils.
- Ensure governors receive sufficient information to help them assess progress at class level.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children in Reception are on track to exceed the expectations for their age in all areas of learning. They make rapid progress which continues throughout the school, especially in speaking and listening, reading and using numbers as labels for counting. Learning in this school is characterised by pupils listening attentively to their teachers and then having opportunities to solve problems in groups. This contributes to their excellent social skills. Pupils in Year 6 attain consistently high levels in national tests because the class teacher ensures that all pupils give of their best in lessons. There are no differences between boys' and girls' achievement because the topics studied appeal to both genders. All pupils are clear about the benefits of the school's approach to marking and realise how this helps them to improve. Pupils with special educational needs make outstanding progress due to the commitment and professionalism of the high quality of interventions of support staff. In an excellent Year 5/6 literacy lesson, pupils worked hard at improving their sentences to create effect. When one pupil stated, 'The wind howled relentlessly like a werewolf', his peers applauded his efforts. In a good Year 3/4 literacy lesson, pupils knew how to improve their sentences using a seven step approach which included changing the word order and adding exciting adjectives. In an excellent Year 2 history lesson, the attention paid by pupils to the class teacher's precious book of family mementoes was electrifying; they were developing both empathy and their understanding of chronology. Pupils marvel at the wonders of nature and mankind's achievement in the world of technology and their excellent links with schools both in Europe and Africa contribute to their outstanding knowledge of communities beyond their own.

Attendance is above average and the systems implemented to improve attendance are paying dividends. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and

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those from Traveller backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. ‘The best thing about this school is that the teachers really help us get better at learning,’ said one Traveller pupil, rightly proud of his successes. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for secondary school due to their excellent study skills and high levels of attainment.

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	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is rigorous and exacting, but fun. Regular marking enables all pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils thrive in lessons because of the many exciting learning opportunities offered by an outstanding curriculum. There is a ‘wow factor’ that starts off every new topic and pupils say that they never know what they are going to find when they come into school. It could be a giant’s footsteps linked to problem solving in mathematics or preparation for enterprise weeks when pupils sell harvest produce to help local and global charities. Pilots, artists, environmentalists and authors are just a few of the visitors that enhance the curriculum. A very wide range of exceptionally well-attended extra-curricular clubs fuel pupils’ love of learning. Consistent checks on learning are used well in lessons to assess pupils’ understanding.

Expertly led by the headteacher, staff have devised a curriculum which is tailor-made to the school and the locality, where learning about the local community is integral to all activities. In lessons, excellent links are made with literacy, numeracy and ICT and consequently pupils enjoy writing because there is a genuine need to write.

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

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The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Teachers value pupils’ uniqueness and every opportunity is taken to build their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils say that they can go to any of their teachers for help because their doors are always open.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff form a formidable team. All staff play their part in contributing to school improvement and staff morale is very high. The headteacher pursues every opportunity to give pupils the best start in life and uses parents’ and carers’ expertise to build a learning community. Staff welcome performance management because they want to be as effective as possible. They are involved in monitoring teaching and learn from one another. The leadership and management of the special educational needs provision and the Early Years Foundation Stage are exemplary. Data on pupils’ performance are regularly analysed and any problems are immediately acted upon. Equality of opportunity underpins all aspects of school life, and this is further enhanced by the teaching of tolerance and respect for others together with a firm stance on any form of discrimination. Pupils have foreign pen pals and everything possible is done to ensure that pupils understand their place in the wider world. The school is at the heart of the local community and pupils have excellent links with senior citizens, local charities and the Women’s Institute.

Parents, carers and governors are involved with the school development plan and parents and carers are exceptionally pleased with what the school offers. Partnerships are highly productive, especially with pre-school settings, local secondary schools and cluster groups. Governors are very supportive. They have a good knowledge of all aspects of school life, and are conscientious in ensuring the implementation of robust safeguarding procedures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the	2

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school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children’s attainment on entry is broadly average. As they make such excellent progress, they exceed expectations in all areas of learning. Teaching is outstanding, with very well-planned learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors and a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills through play and tasks which stimulate the senses. For example, when children were learning about the mathematical concepts of long and short, they rolled out clay snakes and compared their length. Children thrive because they are supported in taking risks by ever-watchful staff. Highly creative learning opportunities, such as matching instrumental sounds to Cinderella’s daily activities, kept children highly focused for over 20 minutes. The assessments of children’s learning are accurate, and a strong emphasis is placed upon enjoyable ways of learning how to read. Parents and carers are delighted with the information they receive from staff about children’s learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. A very small minority commented on aspects of bad behaviour and on the lack of progress of pupils who struggle with learning and, they believe, are not getting the correct levels of support. Inspectors found no evidence to support parents’ and carers’ concerns. All pupils, regardless of ability, were very well supported in their learning and behaviour was found to be exemplary.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nettlebed Community 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	87	6	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	67	14	31	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	42	24	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	49	21	47	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	71	13	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	27	60	17	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	62	16	36	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)	27	60	13	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	23	51	18	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	19	42	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	60	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	60	18	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	35	78	10	22	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



17 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nettlebed Community School, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 5DA

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. You attend an outstanding school and we were very impressed by your consistently excellent progress in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. You impressed us by how exceptionally well you get on with one another and how much you know about different cultures. You told us that you love coming to school and how happy you are because you have excellent relationships with your teachers. You said that even when Mr Worsell has to tell you off he still leaves you 'feeling good about yourself'.

You are exceptionally well looked after by a dedicated, hard-working and professional team of teachers who know you all very well and are very supportive. The teaching in your school is excellent and your teachers make lessons really interesting. You know about healthy eating and you tend your garden very well, and we liked your mini-enterprise projects. You know the value of money and certainly know how to make a profit. You are exceptionally kind and welcoming and we were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and your good attendance. Your school is well managed by your governors who support Mr Worsell in his efforts to give you the very best education.

Some of you in the infants do not do quite so well with your writing because sometimes the work that you get is a bit too easy for you. You can help by asking your teachers to give you more challenging tasks if you think you can do them. Your teachers are generally really good at using the marks they give you to make sure that your work is right for you.

With all best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Lead inspector

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