

Niton Primary School

School Lane, Niton, Isle of Wight PO38 2BP

Inspection dates 25–26 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is inconsistent across subjects and classes. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- In some mathematics and writing lessons, pupils are not always provided with the best resources to support their learning.
- Pupils are not always given sufficient time to improve their work.
- Some pupils receive work that does not support them in making good progress because it is either too easy or too hard.
- In mathematics, teachers do not always have the subject knowledge to develop pupils' calculation skills.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations, particularly of the most able.
- Standards reached by the end of Key Stage 2 are not high enough in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- In writing, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to discuss their ideas and develop their use of vocabulary before they start their work.

The school has the following strengths:

- The new headteacher is changing the school rapidly through his drive and passion for improvement.
- Leaders at various levels, including governors, are regularly checking the quality of teaching and learning. This is leading to rapid improvements in pupils' current progress.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Parents and carers feel very welcome in school and have established effective partnerships with staff.
- Standards reached in reading at the end of Year 1 are higher than the national average.
- Children get off to a positive start in the Reception Year as a result of good teaching.
- The introduction of themed days has brought many exciting opportunities to extend their studies.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons taught by nine teachers. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and members of the governing body. A telephone discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions and meetings took place with pupils over the two days. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors considered 39 responses to Parent View questionnaires and spoke informally to parents and carers at the beginning of the school day. They also met with a parent or carer who requested a meeting.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club run by the governing body.
- As this inspection began as a monitoring inspection, questionnaires were not circulated to staff and so their views of the provision were collected during conversations held during the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors viewed the work of the school. They scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, policies, tracking evidence relating to pupils' progress and attainment, safeguarding documents and pupils' work.

Inspection team

Susan Gadd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Cooper

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who come from ethnic minority backgrounds is well below average with very few speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll is lower than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. This additional government funding is used to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for progress and attainment.
- Children attend the early years provision full time.
- The current executive headteacher has been seconded from the The Bay Church of England Primary School since September 2014. As a result of this change in leadership, the governing bodies of both schools are working in a formal collaboration.
- The Chair of the Governing Body from the Bay Church of England Primary School is now a member of the governing body at Niton Primary School.
- The school was placed in special measures in July 2013. Since the last inspection the school has had four monitoring visits. During this time there have been significant changes in staffing and the membership of the governing body.
- An external review of governors has taken place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the rates in pupils' progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use their knowledge of pupils' abilities to set work at the right level
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve
 - pupils are provided with sufficient time to improve their work and to respond to adults' comments
 - older pupils have regular opportunities to practise their spelling, grammar and punctuation in order to improve their vocabulary in written work
 - teachers provide pupils with the resources they need to support their learning
 - adults receive appropriate training in teaching calculation skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection there have been three executive headteachers. Each of these has brought about improvements to the school, and with the current executive headteacher those changes are coming to fruition. The formal collaboration with The Bay Church of England Primary School has been the most significant step in securing leadership capacity and skills at all levels.
- The executive headteacher has successfully established a 'can do' culture in which all staff feel enthusiastic about ensuring that pupils make rapid progress. The success of this is evident in pupils' improved outcomes, and this is mainly attributable to the significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, leadership and management are not outstanding because teaching has not been good enough over time to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- Staff and governors are very clear about the school's strengths and areas for development because of the regular monitoring that is undertaken. For example, senior and middle leaders carry out weekly checks on lessons and pupils' work and hold discussions with them about their learning.
- The literacy and numeracy leaders also use their observations and check the school's information to identify pupils or groups who are at risk of falling behind. These leaders then work with teachers to provide strategies to ensure these pupils' learning is soon back on track.
- As a result of the regular checks carried out by leaders, self-evaluation is accurate and drives the work of all leaders. This has brought about significant improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching through the use of coaching, tailored training and closer teamwork.
- The teaching and learning leader has worked closely with a number of staff to improve planning, marking and the use of assessment. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching across the school such that teaching is good for many, but not yet all.
- The special educational needs coordinator has transformed the way in which pupils are supported both in and outside the classroom. She can point to particular improvements in pupils' outcomes as a result of more effective one-to-one support and group work.
- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of what adults do within the school. Additional government funding has been used to provide effective support for disadvantaged pupils. The progress made by many of these pupils is rapidly narrowing the gap left by past underachievement.
- Systems to check the performance of teachers are robust. Evidence such as lesson observations, pupils' work and discussion from pupil progress meetings is used by leaders to set targets. The arrangements for setting targets for staff are strongly linked to pupils' progress and teachers' pay.
- The range of subjects has significantly improved and is now broad and balanced with a particular emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils now talk about their learning with enthusiasm, especially when they recount their experiences of theme days. For example, pupils explained how they 'travelled the world' during 'Airport day' and learned about different cultures and traditions while applying their English and mathematical skills.
- Pupils have varied opportunities to learn about British values through assemblies, topic work and through the various charities they raise money for. In particular, pupils talked passionately about the importance of tolerance and respect towards different religions and beliefs, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school's work and report how welcome they now feel. As one parent or carer stated, 'If the school stays doing what it is doing, it will do well!' Communication systems have improved and parents and carers are receiving more information about their child's progress.
- The most able pupils are beginning to make stronger progress as a result of undertaking challenging activities that make them think, although this is still not consistently good.
- The government sports funding has been used to provide swimming lessons for pupils in Year 5. It has also been used to employ specialist coaches to run after-school clubs such as football, cricket, hockey, dance and gymnastics. Participation has increased due to the range, interest and quality of the activities offered.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. Training is up to date and records of attendance and behaviour are carefully analysed to detect any emerging issues.
- The local authority has provided good support in developing the capacity of leaders at various levels, improving teaching and ensuring that current assessments are accurate.

■ The governance of the school:

- The leadership of governors has improved significantly since the last inspection. The support from the local authority and the formal collaboration with The Bay Church of England Primary School has helped to focus governors' efforts.
- Governors are now very knowledgeable about the school and carry out regular checks to ensure that they have up-to-date information on the school priorities and the quality of teaching.
- They have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and can now interpret the school's data rather than relying solely on information from leaders. This, along with external reports, enables governors to hold leaders to account.
- Governors are knowledgeable about school finances and how additional government funding is monitored and evaluated. They have a good understanding of the arrangements for setting targets for teachers that are linked to pupils' progress. They also know what is being done to reward good teaching and tackle underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning. This is seen in pupils' attendance which is now broadly average. Growing numbers of pupils are beginning to gain a real thirst for learning as a result of the changes to the curriculum. Low levels of disruption are limited to occasions where teaching is not yet good.
- At breakfast and after-school club, behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy playing and learning together.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils are polite and helpful both in lessons and around the school; as one child stated, 'We like caring for each other.'
- Playtime has improved. Pupils enjoy the new play equipment and teachers are modelling how to play positively. For example, during break time adults encouraged pupils to join in with various skipping activities.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare and logs indicate that there are fewer incidents of poor behaviour than in the past. This is linked to the improvements in teaching and the introduction of a new behaviour policy which pupils and adults understand.
- Parents and carers support the positive views that pupils have about behaviour.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe and this is supported by the views of parents and carers.
- Adults responsible for child protection have received the correct training. Clear policies are in place regarding the roles and responsibilities of all staff.
- Pupils have had lessons on e-safety, 'stranger danger' and road safety. They talk with confidence about how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. Pupils are clear about who to go to if they should feel unsafe.
- During a focused anti-bullying week, pupils learned about the most common forms of bullying. Pupils are clear that bullying is very rare and there is always an adult they can turn to for support; as one child stated, 'We don't have bullying here!' Pupils talk about the importance of their class 'Spencer Bear' representatives, who they can go to discuss their worries.
- The school has had new fencing installed to ensure that pupils are safe at all times while on the site.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has turned a corner since the last inspection. It is improving rapidly but is not yet consistently good across all classes and subjects.
- In the most effective mathematics lessons, adults use their understanding of pupils' knowledge to plan or adjust work to challenge pupils to make rapid progress. However, not all teachers have the expertise required to do this effectively, especially in calculation. As a result, work can be too easy or difficult.
- Resources used at Key Stages 1 and 2 are not always chosen well by teachers in mathematics and writing to support pupils in their learning. For example in Key Stage 1, pupils were given a 'number line' where the numbers were much too closely spaced for pupils to use.

- A close look at pupils' work shows that in writing pupils are beginning to write at length and explore a variety of genres. Pupils' work clearly shows that writing is improving but it is still not good enough, especially for the most able.
- Although progress in writing is still inconsistent, there are pockets of good progress. For example, in Year 6, pupils make better progress when they are given more opportunities to talk about their writing and the vocabulary they intend to use before they begin their work.
- In Year 5, pupils' progress is accelerated in writing when they are encouraged to apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling to capture the interest of the reader. However, this strong practice is not yet consistent across all classes.
- Teaching assistants are now used more effectively during lessons and ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium are beginning to make stronger progress than in the past. However, there are still some pupils in these groups whose progress is not yet good.
- The school policy for marking is now applied more consistently in writing and mathematics. Teachers provide helpful advice to support pupils in their learning but do not always give pupils sufficient time to improve their work by responding to adults' comments.
- Pupils have a stronger understanding of their targets through the introduction of 'Must, should and could' targets displayed on learning walls in every classroom. These targets are used well by teachers and pupils alike to improve their learning in mathematics and writing.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy using 'learning ladders' to help them check the progress they are making in lessons. Other pupils across the school enjoy talking about their learning with each other and checking each other's work.
- Pupils are proud of their work and take great care in their presentation. Classrooms are bright and displays celebrate the work of pupils.
- The teaching of reading is stronger than previously. Reading activities are built into a range of lessons to encourage pupils to discuss the different techniques used by authors in various texts and to develop their reading skills. Pupils report that they enjoy reading and the introduction of 'Book talk' makes them want to read more.
- A significant improvement to teaching is that it now provides pupils with varied opportunities to discuss their ideas and question their learning such that in some lessons there is a real passion for learning. In one such lesson in Year 4, pupils thrived on the problems they were set in mathematics. Without prompting from the teacher they chose to research the properties of shapes; as one child said, 'I am not going to let this beat me.'

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 is not consistent enough, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 was broadly average. Standards reached in reading were stronger than in writing and mathematics. The most able pupils did less well than their peers nationally, particularly in writing and mathematics, at the time they left in Year 6.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium are now beginning to make similar progress from their different starting points to their peers and in some cases better. In the 2014 national tests, disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with other pupils' nationally was similar in reading and approximately two terms behind in mathematics and writing. When compared with other pupils in the school, the equivalent gaps are about half a term in reading, writing and mathematics. However gaps overall are now beginning to close but with some variability in different year groups.
- The school's current data and scrutiny of work from Key Stages 1 and 2 indicate that pupils are making faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics since the last inspection. This is due to significant improvements in the quality of teaching. These changes are beginning to eradicate the legacy of past underachievement.
- Standards in spelling, grammar and punctuation at Key Stage 2 are also beginning to rise significantly as a result of improved teaching.
- Attainment of the most able pupils in writing and mathematics, although rising, is still not high enough. These pupils are now clearly identified in pupil progress meetings as requiring focused support, and this is beginning to improve the rate at which they make progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have started to make stronger progress than in the past. Targeted support is provided to these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and as a result

progress is beginning to improve rapidly but it is still not good.

The early years provision

is good

- The leadership of the early years provision is good. Since the last inspection much work has taken place to identify the strengths and areas for development in this part of the school. As a result, children now make good progress from starting points which are typical for their age.
- In 2014, more children achieved a good level of development than seen nationally and as a result were well prepared for starting Year 1.
- The early years leader now supports other schools on the Isle of Wight so that they can learn from her experiences and develop their expertise.
- Since the last inspection, the inside and outdoor classrooms have been transformed to engage children in their learning. Many opportunities now exist for children to practise their number and writing skills. As a result, children make good progress. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that the use of the outdoor classroom could be improved by providing a sheltered area so that children can use it all the time.
- Adults meet regularly to share their observations of children's learning and their next steps. They adjust the planned activities on a regular basis to meet the needs and interests of children. For example, girls who had previously been struggling with the concept of money were now using the large coins in the outdoor learning area as a game. This helped them to enjoy the activity and make good progress.
- Children are allocated key workers who provide good links with parents and carers. Each week a 'tapestry wall' is created within the classroom so that parents, carers and adults can share the achievements of children.
- Adults ensure that all children are kept safe. Children are well cared for and behaviour is good.
- Good communication links have been established with parents and carers, both informally at the beginning and end of each day as well as through regular emails. Parents and carers have access to a weekly blog updating them on how they can support their child's learning. For example, this week parents, carers and children made eggs so that children could decorate them in preparation for Easter.
- Adults use careful questioning to support children in their learning, activities are varied and resources are chosen according to the needs of children. This was evident in a lesson where children were learning about letters and sounds. In this lesson, one child used magnetic letters to practise sounds; others wrote particular letters while sounding them out while the majority of children wrote sentences using new words.
- All children, including those that are disadvantaged, the most able and those that are disabled and those with special educational needs, make good progress as a result of the focused teaching and improved planning.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118165
Local authority	Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
Inspection number	454090

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Bartholomew
Executive Headteacher	Duncan Mills
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 July 2013
Telephone number	01983 730209
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