

Inspection of Nonington Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Nonington, Dover, Kent CT15 4LB

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

All pupils feel a special sense of care in this small rural school. The school has significantly increased pupil numbers in recent months. Pupils value the warm relationships they have with staff. Those new to the school feel welcomed and cared for. The school has more pupils with some form of disadvantage than the national average. These pupils and their families feel valued and included in all aspects of school life.

Staff are aspirational for pupils' learning. However, the school has not consistently realised the ambitions of the curriculum. As a result, not all pupils achieve as well as they could. Pupils are eager to learn and are enthusiastic about what they know. They are proud of learning about their links to the local coal mining heritage.

Pupils understand the school's clear expectations of how to treat each other. They remember the 'golden rule' of treating others as you wish to be treated. As a result, at playtimes, all pupils play together kindly and inclusively. All pupils feel safe and trust staff, who they know are there to listen if they have any worries or concerns.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children make a positive start in Reception. The curriculum is carefully planned to provide opportunities for children to engage with each other and key learning. Children build effective language skills through purposefully chosen activities. They can access appropriate resources and equipment. Adults effectively model interactions and learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive expert care and attention. As a result, all children are ready for the next stage of education.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. The school has identified and ordered all the knowledge that pupils need to learn. The school has done this effectively to reflect the mixed age range classes. In lessons, teachers do not yet consistently follow the curriculum or accurately teach the key concepts. This means pupils do not learn as well as they could. The support of pupils with SEND is a key strength of the school. The school ensures that pupils with complex needs are identified effectively and supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Pupils love reading. They access the library independently. For many they feel this is a safe space. Pupils talk passionately about their favourite authors and books. The school has a clear plan for reading, including the teaching of phonics. However, adults do not typically follow the programme closely or give pupils correct examples. This leads to pupils making inconsistent progress through the reading curriculum and so pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Where teaching is more consistent, pupils who have fallen behind the reading programme are able to catch up with their peers.

Pupils are respectful and caring. The school has a rich mix of pupils with a variety of needs and life experiences. The school has successfully built a culture of inclusive respect. This means that pupils get along and are keen to help each other be the best they can be. At break times, pupils across age ranges play together positively and show genuine

care for their peers. The school has had a large number of pupils join in the last year. This has had an impact on the school attendance figures. However, the school is doing everything possible to improve this. There is evidence of the impact of these actions for the most vulnerable pupils.

Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong. The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum supports pupils to make informed choices about their lives. Pupils thoroughly understand online safety and how to be responsible internet users. The school is an active part of its community through its work with the local church. Alongside this, opportunities such as those at the farm school help pupils become good countryside citizens. The school chooses experiences carefully to broaden pupils' horizons and raise their ambitions.

The school leaders at every level have a deep understanding of inclusivity. The school has a small leadership capacity due to its size. Governors meet their duties and show strong subject and professional knowledge. They have collaborated closely with the local authority. Staff feel well supported working with the pupils with complex SEND. The cooperative culture of the school helps staff to feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of reading lacks consistency. The sounds modelled to pupils and the routines for embedding this knowledge lack accuracy. As a result, pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read do not gain sufficient accuracy or fluency. The school must ensure all staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to follow the chosen phonics programme closely and teach reading effectively.
- Staff do not routinely check what pupils know before moving on. As a result, the tasks that adults set do not build on what pupils have already learned. This means that pupils do not build their learning securely over time as well as they could do.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	118688
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341509
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sebastian Rees and Karen Stanford (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Victoria Solly
Website	www.noningtonprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 April 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a voluntary controlled school and part of the Church of England Diocese of Canterbury. Its last section 48 inspection education was in July 2023.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is federated with Goodnestone Church of England Primary School.
- The co-chairs of the governing body assumed their positions in September 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, local authority representative, diocese representative and members of the governing body, including the co-chairs.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at case studies of the work of some pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View and on-site activity. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, governing body meeting minutes, attendance records and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrea Harris

Ofsted Inspector

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