



Netherfield CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114514
LEA East Sussex
Inspection number 279401
Inspection dates 8 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Terry Elston RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Darvel Down
School category	Voluntary controlled		Netherfield
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Battle, East Sussex TN33 9QF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01424 838323
Number on roll	110	Fax number	01424838323
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Tessa Bishop
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Gill

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small village school that takes pupils from a wide area. Only one third of pupils come from the immediate locality, which is an area classified as one of rural and cultural deprivation. A below-average number of parents claim free school meals for their children, and the school believes more are entitled to do so. There is a mixture of private housing and that owned by the Housing Association. Many pupils join the school at other than normal times and less than a half of those in Year 6 started in Reception. Numbers are rising steadily. About 20% of pupils have special educational needs, mostly with learning difficulties. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none speaks English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that serves its community well. This is also the school's view. The leadership and management of the school are good and the headteacher and senior staff have a very clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Their thorough analysis of pupils' performance enables them to make effective improvements in the teaching and learning to raise standards. The good teaching is an important reason for pupils' good progress. The provision in the Reception class is good and children improve their skills well. The good teaching and interesting curriculum ensure that children settle quickly into school and most make good progress to achieve the expected goals in all areas by the end of the Reception year. Pupils continue this good progress and by the age of eleven, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils enjoy learning and their behaviour is excellent. The curriculum is planned well to make learning interesting for pupils and it prepares them well for the future. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make rapid progress. The outstanding guidance and support keep pupils healthy and safe. The school's partnership with parents is excellent. Provision has improved significantly since the last inspection and the school gives good value for money. In view of the strengths in the leadership, management and teaching, the school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for extended pieces of writing, especially to challenge the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall standards reached by pupils at age 11 are above average and they have achieved consistently well in the national tests over recent years. In 2005, standards were above average in English, mathematics and science and the results over the last five years show good improvement. Compared with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils achieved well and had made very good progress from their results in Year 2 in all three subjects. Pupils met the school's challenging targets in both English and mathematics. The results show good progress from their tests at age seven. More able pupils generally achieve well. In 2005, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in the tests was above average except in writing, which the school rightly has as a priority for improvement.

Children's attainment when they enter the Reception class is generally in line with that found nationally, but many have weak language skills. They make good progress and most meet the expected goals in all areas of their development by the end of the year. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. While standards in the 2005 national tests in Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics, the school met its targets and the significant number of pupils who entered the school

during Year 2 with special educational needs made a big difference to the results. Those pupils who had been in school since Reception did well and nearly all reached the standards expected nationally. Throughout the school, pupils attain high standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and music. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Teachers set them very challenging but achievable targets and provide support of high quality to enable them to meet them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding, a view shared by the school. Pupils speak very highly of their school, and their good attendance and enthusiasm show how much they enjoy learning. They feel safe and free from any form of bullying. Pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning are excellent and explain why they make such good progress in lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In particular, pupils' faith in God, their outstanding awareness of right and wrong and their highly developed social skills are evident in assemblies, lessons and in the playground. Pupils' outstanding poems about those who died in the two world wars show a deep awareness of sacrifice and the sadness of war, for example.

Pupils have a very good awareness of the need to stay healthy. They speak knowledgeably about the value of fruit and vegetables in a good diet and know the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and do it outstandingly well. This, together with their good skills in basic literacy and numeracy, does much to enhance their future economic well-being. The school council takes its responsibilities very seriously, and helps all pupils make a very good contribution to school improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and this explains why pupils learn well and make such good progress. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' work and pupils respond well by trying hard to succeed. However, they do not always plan enough activities for pupils to write long pieces of work, either in English or other subjects, and this helps to explain why few of them attain high levels in writing by Year 6. Teachers make lessons enjoyable by using exciting resources, including large computer screens that pupils find fascinating. The pace of lessons is usually very brisk and this holds pupils' attention throughout the lesson. An excellent example of this was in a Year 6 numeracy lesson when the teacher provided a succession of exciting challenges for pupils that taught them much about probability in a short time.

Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and set them challenging but achievable targets. This gives pupils a good understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve. The very good partnership between teachers and teaching assistants ensures

that pupils who need help are supported very well in their learning. The school has an excellent partnership with parents. They are provided with a wealth of information about the curriculum and their child's progress that enables them to provide valuable support at home. The school's excellent interactive website does much to inform parents about the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that makes learning very interesting. Detailed guidance ensures teachers have a good basis for lesson plans that meet the learning needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in a class. The very good planning for pupils with special educational needs explains why they make rapid progress especially in their basic reading and number skills.

The school enriches the curriculum with an excellent range of activities at lunchtime and after school that gives pupils many opportunities to sing, learn to play musical instruments, improve their artistic skills and play sport. These activities are well attended and justify the time that all staff contribute. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. The well-planned residential visits for Year 6 pupils give them excellent first-hand knowledge of history and geography and do a lot to develop their social skills. The school has worked hard to improve the curriculum for ICT since the last inspection and pupils speak highly of the impact that computers have, both on their learning and their enjoyment of lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's care, guidance and support of pupils is outstanding, a view that is also strongly held by parents and carers. Health and safety procedures are very thorough and staff make detailed assessments of risks before taking pupils out of school. Child protection systems are very good. Pupils are emphatic that they feel safe at school and all know who to see if they have worries. The care and support of children in the Foundation Stage are very good. They soon learn how to dress and look after themselves and make an important start at learning the rules about good behaviour and caring for others. Teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils' academic and personal development and they use it effectively to improve standards of work and behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs are supported and guided very well. Their needs are identified as soon as they enter school and their individual programmes of work help them make quick progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads very well and has quickly generated a very strong team spirit in the school. She has a very good awareness of what needs improving and how to do it. This is achieved by working very closely with

subject leaders to make very thorough assessments of pupils' performance, and using expertise within the staff and from outside the school to rectify weaknesses in teaching and learning. The rigorous evaluation of teaching by the headteacher and senior staff has been very effective in making improvements, and has been particularly successful recently in raising standards in science. The deputy headteacher's contribution has been significant in the way he has used his expertise to raise standards in music and ICT.

The headteacher and staff have made good links with other schools that provide useful opportunities for joint training. They also ensure that pupils are prepared very well for their next school.

The headteacher also takes the lead in the personal development of pupils, both in assemblies and in less formal meetings with pupils. The effectiveness of this work can be seen every day in the way pupils work, behave and reflect deeply on issues.

The governing body provides good support and guidance to the school. Governors have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use regular visits to the school and meetings with staff and pupils to challenge staff and help to make improvements

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Netherfield Church of England Primary School Darvel Down Netherfield Battle East Sussex
TN33 9QF

10 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us when we came to visit your school. We both really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so energetically in the playground. Your singing was excellent when we saw you in assembly. Those who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about your school.

What we liked most about your school

- You are very friendly and helpful to visitors.
- You do well in the special tests in Year 2 and Year 6.
- You work very hard in lessons and enjoy learning.
- Your headteacher runs the school very well and knows how to improve things.
- The teachers are doing a good job. They work hard and are helping you make good progress.
- Your behaviour is excellent, both in class and in the playground.
- You think a lot about other people who are not as lucky as you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Help you to write longer and more interesting stories.

I hope you find the report interesting. We certainly enjoyed writing such a good one!

Yours sincerely

Mr Terry Elston

(Lead inspector)