



# Northbourne Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 123221  
**LEA** Oxfordshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 281433  
**Inspection dates** 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Olson Davis AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Cockcroft Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Didcot
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Oxfordshire OX11 8LJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01235817744
<b>Number on roll</b>	259	<b>Fax number</b>	01235811768
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr H Collins-Rice
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mary Burr

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281433
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

## Description of the school

Northbourne C of E Aided Primary School is an average sized primary school situated in an area of socio-economic disadvantage. Whilst most pupils come from less affluent homes, a significant minority of pupils come from home circumstances which are generally favourable. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The vast majority of the school's population are of White British descent and are fluent in English. Pupils' skills on entry to the school are generally below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average. The number of pupils in each year group varies. Consequently, some pupils are taught in single age classes and others are taught in mixed age classes. When the previous headteacher retired in 2003 the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher until the present headteacher took over in September 2004.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspection evidence confirms the school's view that its overall effectiveness is good. The school is well focused on raising standards and has been successful in tackling weaknesses identified through comprehensive self evaluation. Although the impact of some improvements is clearly evident not all have yet come to full fruition. Under the clear leadership of the new headteacher the school is well placed to improve. The school is well led and managed and provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils make good progress. Effective provision in the Foundation Stage gives the children a good start and, as a result, they reach the goals set for the end of the reception year. In 2004, standards at the end of Year 6 were average and not as high as they should be in English and mathematics. Progress, in the past, has been inconsistent. This has been and continues to be rigorously tackled by the new headteacher and the senior leadership team. They are focusing all their efforts on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. As a consequence results in 2005 show improvement and the pupils are now making good progress in many lessons. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with many good features. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 are good. There remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching within Years 3 to 6. The school cares well for its pupils and promotes personal development and well-being effectively. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well, have positive attitudes and enjoy learning. The school is effective in encouraging its pupils to respect the cultures of other countries through its international links. The curriculum is good with many enrichment activities that pupils enjoy.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

\* Raise standards in English and mathematics throughout Key Stage 2.\* Continue to share best practice to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching within Key Stage 2.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with skill levels below those expected for their age. Recent improvements to the curriculum and teaching mean that the youngest children make good progress and reach the goals set for the end of the reception year. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils are achieving well and reaching good standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved over the last few years because the teachers have carefully analysed the pupils' performance and taken successful steps to, for example, improve writing. The results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 showed the pupils made good progress between Year 2 and Year 6 and attained good standards. In 2004 standards were satisfactory. The school's own rigorous analysis shows that this dip was caused by earlier inconsistent achievement and an unsettled Year 6.

Nevertheless, standards in science remained well above average. In English and mathematics they were average and not as high as they should be. Direct and robust action has been taken to ensure the pupils make the progress they should and reach the standards of which they are capable. As a consequence the 2005 results show an improvement in pupils' performance in the national assessments and pupils are now making good progress in most lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are making similar progress to their classmates.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils have a good awareness of cultural issues as a result of the schools involvement in international projects but they have too few opportunities to develop an awareness of the cultural diversity found in Britain today. Pupils are happy, like coming to school and respond well in lessons. Pupils are friendly and helpful. Over lunch pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy lessons. Relationships and behaviour are good. Pupils contribute effectively to the life of the school through their involvement in the school council. The experience they gain from applying for and being interviewed for jobs such as library monitors and playground helpers, allows them to understand life in a community and prepares them well for their futures. They accept and enjoy the responsibilities they are given. Attendance levels are consistently above average and punctuality is good. Pupils say they feel safe and secure. This allows them to be confident and enjoy lessons and develops their personal qualities well. The school places an emphasis on sport and provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. This, along with the school's effective encouragement of healthy eating, is helping pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. 'Wake and shake' sessions in the hall get the day off to an energetic start for some pupils.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school's evaluation clearly shows that past inconsistencies in teaching and learning have slowed progress between Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst some of these inconsistencies within the Key Stage remain, for example, in the quality of teachers' questioning of pupils, firm action by the leadership team and changes in teaching staff have brought significant improvements and as a consequence there is much good teaching. In the Foundation Stage the youngest children are well-taught. They are encouraged to learn through an interesting range of activities that are both directed by the teacher and allow independence and choice. Effective teaching in Years 1 and 2 has resulted in pupils making particularly good progress over the last two years. As a result standards have risen. Positive relationships within classrooms result in pupils behaving well. They respond well to the task the teachers set and enjoy their learning. Lessons are well planned and are based on a

good knowledge of pupils' needs and what they need to learn to make rapid progress. This was clearly evident in Year 5 and 6 numeracy lessons which had considerable energy and pace that engaged a lower ability group of pupils in effective learning. In this and many other lessons the teachers' effective use of questioning helps pupils to give extended explanations, deepening the pupils' understanding. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by well-qualified teaching assistants and, as a result, they work well towards the targets set for them. The teachers regularly mark the pupils' work and set them clear targets for the next stage of learning. The pupils' performance is rigorously checked and analysed. Teachers use this information well to set ambitious targets for each pupil and cohort.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a good curriculum, that includes French, which motivates and engages the pupils. In the reception class the children have many opportunities to make choices in the classroom and in the extensive and secure outdoor area. The curriculum is well planned and modified to meet the pupils' needs. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. They are well supported and helped to work towards the clear targets set for them. Information and communication technology is used to good effect throughout the school. In the reception class the children 'play with sounds' and create simple rhyming words on the interactive whiteboard. Pupils in Year 2 use software to order pictures of the life of Florence Nightingale and answer questions they have raised about them. Year 5 and 6 teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards in their teaching, for example, to help pupils to understand co-ordinates. The school provides a good range of after school clubs and uses visits to places of interest to enhance learning. The older pupils found out a lot of interesting things and say that they had a 'wicked' time at the Science Museum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care provided by the school for its pupils is good. The school has good procedures for child protection and health and safety, including careful attention to risk assessments. Safety is strongly promoted and monitored well enabling all pupils to feel secure in school. Pupils report that the rare incidents relating to bullying are dealt with very effectively. They feel that all members of staff treat them fairly and this helps to maintain good standards of behaviour. Very sensitive and effective care is given to vulnerable pupils with the school taking the initiative to gain help from local support services. The school council provides a very good forum for pupils to have a say in the running of the school. For example their views have contributed well to the development of the wildlife area and the nature trail. Pupils say they feel well prepared for their move to Secondary school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because the new headteacher and senior leadership team have effectively identified and tackled areas of weakness. They are successfully focused on raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of pupils. The new headteacher gives clear direction to the school and involves the whole community in the quest for improvement. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and rigorous. The senior leadership team is effective in checking the school's performance and highlighting precise areas for improvement. Through this and the monitoring of teaching, the school identified weaknesses in teaching. Decisive action to address these weaknesses has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and the pupils' progress in lessons. Greater consistency in the quality of education in all areas of the school has already been achieved. Teacher's targets for improvement are firmly linked to school improvement priorities whilst promoting teachers' professional development. Issues relating to the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Consequently the school is well placed to make further improvements. Subject leaders carry out their leadership and management roles well. They play an active role in monitoring and improving the quality of the curriculum and teaching in the subjects they lead. They successfully lead whole staff initiatives and evaluate the impact of developments. Governors are effective. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. They closely monitor and evaluate the school's performance and provide good challenge to school leaders on issues such as standards and pupil progress.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited recently. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say about your school.

We found many good things happening in your school. Here are some of them: \* You enjoy school, behave well and work hard in lessons. \* The school teaches you to stay safe and healthy and is helping you to become responsible members of the community. \* There are many good teachers in the school who give you interesting work and help you to do well in lessons. \* The adults take good care of you at school. \* The headteacher, senior teachers and governors know your school well and what needs to be done to make it even better.

There are two main things that we think your school should do to help you even more. \* Help you to do even better at English and mathematics. \* Making the teaching in Years 3 to 6 even better by teachers sharing more what they think works really well. We know that you will continue to enjoy your school. We hope that you will help your teachers as they try to make your school the best that it can be for you.