



# Ninfield Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114515  
**Local Authority** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 289947  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Sheila Browning

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Ninfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Battle TN33 9JW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 892486
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	144	<b>Fax number</b>	01424 893223
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Janet Pattersson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Bye
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 May 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12–13 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289947
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Ninfield is smaller than most other primary schools. Most pupils are from White British families. A few are from minority ethnic backgrounds and most speak English as their first language. In recognition of its work, the school has received a Silver Healthy School award. Pupil mobility is high and pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Following a period of significant changes to staffing, including those at senior management level, the school now has a stable complement of staff.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ninfield is a good, rapidly improving and popular school. It meets the needs of all of its learners well. As one parent commented, 'It is a happy, caring environment where the children are safe and well cared for. My child cannot wait to go to school each day'. The headteacher leads the school outstandingly well. Her determination to provide the very best for the children has led to many significant improvements. The good leadership and management, including the work of the senior management team and governors, result in strong and successful teamwork. The outstanding curriculum underpins pupils' good personal development and ensures pupils benefit from a rich learning experience within which all achieve well. The outstanding care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and eagerness to learn. Consequently, pupils' behaviour and relationships are excellent. They are proud of their school and take part enthusiastically in all the opportunities they are given. Teaching and learning have been considerably strengthened. They are now good, and occasionally excellent, which is why pupils progress well. The school is working steadily to develop pupils' involvement in evaluating their own levels of understanding of what they have learned. Nevertheless, the school is aware that this approach has not yet been developed far enough.

Pupils achieve well and standards are above average by Year 6. Children join the school with lower-level skills than expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception as a result of stimulating learning opportunities and effective teaching. Consequently, attainment is broadly as expected by the end of this year. Since the last inspection, pupils' progress has improved significantly in Key Stage 2 and has generally increased in Key Stage 1, where test results have improved year on year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain average standards by Year 2 and in lessons they are beginning to make good progress. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' achievement increases rapidly, enabling them to achieve above-average standards by the time they leave the school.

Although attendance is satisfactory, it could be better. While the school is working with parents to reduce absences, there are still too many occasions when pupils are taken on holiday during term time.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the part that pupils play in assessing themselves in what they know and can do.
- Strengthen the methods for promoting with parents the benefits of uninterrupted attendance so that pupils do not miss school unnecessarily.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter the school with skills below the level expected for their age in most areas of learning. They make good progress in Reception and the majority achieve the expected goals by Year 1, although the attainment of some remains below expectations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain average standards; nevertheless, pupils in lessons are now beginning to make good progress. The previous shortfall in pupils' attainment in Years 3 and 4 is being tackled well and pupils' progress is now satisfactory. Pupil mobility is high, particularly in Year 2; however, the stable group achieves well. By the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, their progress accelerates and most achieve exceptionally well, particularly in English. In 2005, for example, test standards were above average overall and were exceptionally high in English. The school's most recent test results for 2006 in Key Stage 2 indicate that standards will again be similarly high, with most pupils having met or exceeded demanding targets. More-able pupils and those with learning difficulties make good progress because of the challenging programmes of intervention and support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school. Their behaviour is excellent. Pupils feel safe from bullying and know there is always someone with whom they can share concerns. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as illustrated in their sensitivity to the needs of others. Attendance, though improving, is satisfactory and could be better. Pupils' great enjoyment is evident in their positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils contribute well to the school and local communities. They show initiative and enjoy responsibility. Older pupils value being 'buddies' to younger children; as one of the 'buddies' said, 'It helps you to remember what it's like to be small'. The school and class councils are effective in contributing to the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils gain valuable experience of negotiation and decision making. These activities develop a good awareness of wider social and economic issues, as do their fund-raising efforts. Work related to gaining 'Healthy School' status has given pupils a clear understanding of the need for safety, regular exercise and healthy eating. Pupils enjoy the fresh fruit and vegetables available each day, and the take-up of sporting activities is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching has significantly improved and is a key feature in the school's ongoing improvement. Teachers have high expectations. This important feature, combined with clear explanations of learning objectives and a sustained brisk pace, results in pupils' enthusiastic participation in learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They

plan and set interesting and challenging tasks that are matched well to the diverse needs and ages in each class. The school's recently acquired interactive whiteboards are used well to give an effective visual stimulus to pupils' learning. Teachers' perceptive questioning, together with frequent and effective use of discussion between pupils, helps learners clarify their thinking and carefully consider their responses. For example, in a successful literacy lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 gave thoughtful answers to questions concerning what constitutes an effective curriculum vitae. Teaching assistants provide effective support for all pupils.

Effective use of assessment information, particularly in English and mathematics, helps to monitor and track pupil performance and set challenging targets for future learning. The marking of work helps pupils' understanding of what they should do to improve. The school is now working to involve pupils regularly in evaluating their own progress, which will help them to be more involved in their learning and to achieve even better.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils of all ages have a rich and interesting curriculum. It is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it meets the needs of all learners. Since the last inspection there has been much improvement in pupils' writing skills at Key Stage 1 and in pupils' investigational skills in mathematics and science. Those needing extra support and those who are more able are well supported and challenged to reach their potential. The highly successful comprehensive programme for pupils' personal, social, and health education most effectively promotes healthy and safe lifestyles. This aspect of the curriculum and the good emphasis given to pupils' personal development through citizenship are highly valued by parents. French and drama also add to the wide range of experiences open to pupils. Despite limited space for physical activities, the pupils do not miss out. Opportunities to develop their skills through creative, performance and sporting activities are outstanding. Visits and visitors, and numerous extra-curricular and enrichment activities such as Latin and cookery, enhance pupils' learning and prepare them well for their future lives. Excellent links with local schools and the wider community mean that pupils develop a wide range of skills, such as in water polo and cycling proficiency.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Child protection, risk assessments and health and safety procedures are robust. Arrangements to help children settle into the Foundation Stage are very good and their well-being is ensured by vigilant supervision. Pupils are involved in setting up class rules and are highly responsible. They say they feel safe, and know about road safety and how to lead healthy lifestyles. As a result of the excellent provision, they choose to eat healthy lunches and enjoy numerous physical activities. Links with parents and outside multi-agencies, such as local partnership for children, are strong. These and intervention programmes significantly help improve pupils' progress. Parental responses indicated a very strong satisfaction with the guidance and support provided.

The personal support for pupils with emotional or social difficulties and those gifted and talented is very effective because they achieve well.

Pupils' progress is tracked and analysed thoroughly. They know their learning targets, though opportunities to involve them in their own self-assessment are not yet embedded. Constructive marking helps them understand exactly how to improve further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective leadership and management have created a supportive and stimulating learning environment in which learners achieve well in their academic and personal development. Since her appointment two years ago, the headteacher has given outstanding leadership. With good support from the recently established leadership team, staff and governors, she has led significant improvements in teaching, curriculum provision and resources. Such developments have resulted in improved levels of attainment and increased achievement. The school has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to make further gains, and its determination and success to date show that it has good capacity for further improvement.

The school's self-evaluation procedures accurately identify its strengths and areas for development. The school improvement plan is detailed and well constructed, and takes into account the views of all involved with the school, especially parents and pupils. Senior managers, together with subject co-ordinators, undertake regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. This, together with teachers' secure knowledge of pupils' progress, enables the school to set challenging targets for improvement.

Governors carry out their duties effectively. They have successfully redressed a deficit budget and have given the school a stable financial footing. Governors play their full part in strategic planning but are not yet fully acting as critical friends and holding the school to account.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work. Your school is a good school and you are well taught.

These are some important things we found out about your school:

- Ninfield is a happy and safe school and you told us how proud you are of your school.
- You make good progress, particularly those of you in Years 5 and 6.
- You enjoy school, are eager to learn and behave extremely well.
- The school is well led and it continues to improve.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a good start.
- You know how to stay fit and healthy.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting.
- Many of you are involved in the numerous activities at school and in the wider community.
- The adults in the school look after you exceptionally well.

This is what we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- To strengthen the work with parents to help them understand how important it is that you do not miss school unnecessarily.
- Ensure you can play a full part in checking how well you are doing and understanding how you can do even better.