

Northleaze Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109198
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	309922
Inspection date	22 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Uppington
Headteacher	John Jolliffe
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2004
School address	Brook Close Long Ashton Bristol BS41 9NG
Telephone number	01275 540077
Fax number	01275 395531

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	22 May 2008
Inspection number	309922

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The slight downward trend in standards at Key Stage 1 and the achievement at Key Stage 2 of pupils who achieved Level 2 at Key Stage 1.
- How effectively the school is led and managed when the headteacher is not present.
- The use of information from stakeholder surveys. Evidence was gathered from
 - discussions with leaders, a governor, pupils, parents and staff
 - visits to all classes
 - scrutiny of pupils' work
 - observation of other aspects of the school day, such as breaktime
 - analysis of parents' questionnaires and school documentation, in particular data on pupils' progress.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Northleaze C of E Primary is a smaller than average school. The proportion of children with learning difficulties is below average. About half of these have either specific learning difficulties or moderate learning difficulties. The rest have either behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or language and communication difficulties. The headteacher is additionally supporting another local school as acting head for a short time. The school has just settled into a new building.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The excellent leadership of the headteacher, and outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils, are key factors in the success of this school. One of the many parents who wrote in support of the school expressed it this way: 'The school has a fantastic team of dedicated and committed staff who have the interests of the children as their priority.' The school has improved considerably over recent years, especially as it settles down after the move into the high quality new buildings.

Pupils achieve outstandingly well. They start school with standards that are above those expected for their age and make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage to enter Year 1 very well prepared for learning. Excellent progress continues throughout the school for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. The slight downward trend at Key Stage 1 has been halted. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. Standards in many other subjects are high, though standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory. The school has identified the reasons for this, and standards are improving now that pupils have access to better quality resources.

The quality of teaching is outstanding. The school has developed excellent systems for checking on the progress of each pupil and identifying what it is they need to do to improve. The recent 'Quality Mark' award praised the quality of these assessment procedures. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and set clear targets to guide them in improving their work. Pupils say that teachers are very good at explaining what they need to do to improve. As a result, pupils who attained average results in Year 2 are challenged appropriately and are achieving as well as other groups. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to motivate and stimulate pupils but the school has identified that not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' independent learning. The well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers to ensure that pupils learn effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties receive excellent support that enables them to make the same progress as other pupils.

There are many reasons why pupils do so well in this school, but the outstanding care, support and guidance are major factors. The school ethos is one of continual support for one another. Parents particularly value the care and support shown for pupils during times of difficulty or emotional need. The exemplary care that pupils receive means that they feel safe and understand how to stay safe. This is reflected in the calm and welcoming environment, where the very good quality displays show that pupils' achievements are valued. Behaviour is excellent. The very few who exhibit challenging behaviour are supported well by staff and by other pupils and therefore do not disrupt learning. The outstanding guidance that pupils receive ensures that they know how to stay healthy and keep fit. They take full advantage of the many sporting activities available and the healthy snacks and school meals provided.

The excellent curriculum provision contributes very well to pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. The very strong emphasis on the 'Every Child Matters' agenda has just been recognised with a 'Leading Aspect Award'. Attendance is well above average. The wide range of extra activities, visits and visitors ensures that pupils really enjoy school and are keen to be there. An innovative feature enjoyed by pupils who take part is the teaching of Latin as well as French. Pupils are keen to take part in all the activities provided and talk with enthusiasm about the wide range of after-school clubs. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social

development is reflected in the care and consideration that pupils show to one another, helping each other whenever possible. Pupils particularly value the 'play leaders' who help ensure that at break times, pupils always have someone to play with. Pupils' cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of life in other countries. The school has recognised that pupils' understanding of the different cultures in Britain is not as strong as other aspects of their personal development and is already exploring ways of developing this further.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community. The many responsibilities that they undertake, including the school council, enable them to develop a good understanding of the fact that all must work together to develop a strong community. The views of the school council are taken into consideration and many of their suggestions acted upon, for example the provision of playground equipment. The many skills gained in this area, together with the high standards attained, mean that pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. The school has identified that higher standards in ICT would further improve this aspect.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school has very robust and effective systems that ensure the school runs smoothly at all times, even when the headteacher is helping at his other school. Procedures for checking on the work of the school are exemplary. All staff and governors have an accurate view of what works well and what needs improving. Governance is excellent. Governors support the school very well and visit frequently to ensure they have a good understanding of how the school operates. The move to a new school building has been handled extremely well and the school has improved significantly in recent years under the excellent leadership of the headteacher. The school goes to considerable lengths to establish the views of pupils and parents and these are listened to very well and acted on where appropriate. Considering all factors, this school is extremely well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get a very good start in this school. All adults are sensitive to the needs of the children and skilled at meeting these. There is a good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. Children are really motivated to learn and all engage in activities with enthusiasm. Children clearly enjoy learning and are eager to talk about what they are doing. Detailed and rigorous assessment of children's skills ensures that activities are matched very well to the needs of individuals. Children with learning difficulties are identified early through these procedures. This ensures that they are given additional support and make good progress. A key strength of the teaching is the way that children's social skills are developed to prepare them for learning. This sets the tone for the rest of the school. Children start school with skills above those normally found in children of this age, although writing skills and creative development are in line. Excellent teaching ensures that children make very good progress. Children start Year 1 very well prepared for learning and with skills well above average apart from writing, which is above average.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in ICT to match those in other subjects.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

23 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northleaze C of E Primary School, Long Ashton BS41 9NG

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school and for telling me so much about it. Here are some of the things that I found out.

- You think Northleaze C of E Primary is a really good school. I agree with you; in fact, I think that it is outstanding.
- You enjoy school very much and feel that your teachers help you a lot.
- The school looks after you extremely well and the support that you get in times of difficulty or need is super.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you all work hard to support and help one another.
- You are doing very well and achieving exceptionally high standards because of the excellent teaching.
- The school gives you many interesting things to do that make learning fun. I particularly like the Latin.
- Your school is so good because of the outstanding leadership and management of your headteacher and the governors.
- All of the staff are good at finding out what works in your school and what needs improving.
- I was particularly impressed with the way that everyone in the school works as a team to try to make the school even better than it is.

There is very little that your school needs to do better but I have asked them to look at just one thing that I think will help you:

- to raise standards in information and communication technology to match those in other subjects.

Thank you for being so helpful and polite when I was with you. I am sure you will continue to work hard and do your best.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake Lead Inspector