

# Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110021
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310178
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Thrusell

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs T Watson-Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs B Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Ufton Nervet Reading RG7 4HH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 983 2223
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 983 4585

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	310178

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, and leadership and management, gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with children, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. 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

This is a smaller than average sized school serving a rural area. There is little deprivation, with a very small proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils have White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below that of most schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet is a good school. The headteacher, ably assisted by her deputy, leadership team and governors, ensures a good quality of care and education for the pupils. Good links with parents, other schools and agencies contribute well to this. Parents are happy that they can stand around in the playground with their children at the start of the day. One commented, 'The school has a lovely family feeling. It is an ideal environment for children to learn and develop vital life skills.' Pupils feel safe and secure in school, knowing that staff are there to help them if they have any concerns. One pupil commented, 'You can talk to any of the teachers about anything.' Pupils enjoy many things about school, shown in their above average attendance. They particularly enjoy having interactive whiteboards in classrooms and using computers, which 'make learning fun'. The new school council is keen to take on responsibilities, valuing the fact that 'pupils now have a voice'. It helps to organise fund raising activities for charity, recognising that it is important to help others. Links with local schools contribute to the school's good provision for modern foreign languages and coaching for different sports. Pupils know that it is important to eat a balanced diet and to keep fit. They are keen to take part in 'Go Kinetic' each week, where they walk several laps of the school grounds or walk part of the way to school with their parents. Behaviour is excellent, resulting in a harmonious school community and a strong eagerness to learn, backed up by a good, well-enriched curriculum.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. There has been a slight fall in standards here in recent years. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Standards overall are well above average, but writing remains a relative weakness, particularly for boys. Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is good overall, but variable, particularly in Years 3 and 4, where teaching is at times weaker than the good teaching in other year groups within the school. Given their good level of basic skills and personal development, pupils are well prepared for their future life and learning.

Teachers plan and prepare lessons well and establish good working routines, so that little time is wasted. Opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate how well they have done at the end of lessons and to think of how they could make their work better. Teachers generally manage the learning of mixed ability, mixed age classes well, so that all can make good progress. In a good lesson seen in Year 1/2, teachers and assistants worked well with different groups, talking with them about doubling numbers, so helping all to develop their understanding of number. Where teaching is weaker, too much time is spent talking and explaining work to the whole class, rather than letting different groups get on with their work and achieving more. Pupils are involved in setting individual targets to aim for in their learning. The use of targets is more firmly established with older pupils, where they understand their purpose and are particularly keen to achieve them. Some targets are linked more to presentation of work rather than focusing on developing pupils' learning.

The school development plan sets out appropriate areas for improvement, based on careful self-evaluation. Leaders are starting to address the slight fall in standards in Key Stage 1, and the relatively weak writing throughout the school. Phonics are now taught systematically in Reception and Key Stage 1, already showing improvements in pupils' reading and spelling. Pupils have more opportunities to talk about their work and to develop their vocabulary and ideas for writing. More opportunities are now given to pupils to write for a purpose, shown in

good work produced by Year 5/6 pupils, who were journalists for a day. Boys especially are benefiting from this approach to writing. The latest assessments for writing in all year groups show that pupils generally are now making good progress towards their challenging end-of-year targets. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress throughout the school due to the good support they receive. Further curriculum developments are planned, for example making more creative links between subjects to add further interest to learning, and establishing links with a school in Reading to promote further multi-cultural understanding. Given these improvements, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

The school has good procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress. This information is used well to group pupils in lessons and to plan appropriate work for them, and to identify where further support is required. However, the school has only recently started to make a fuller analysis of the progress made in different year groups, discovering years where progress overall is weaker and less consistent. As a result, it is looking more closely at the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, linking improvements needed to performance management. However, the monitoring of lessons, often informal, is not yet frequent or rigorous enough to ensure that improvements are quickly carried through and a high quality of teaching fully maintained throughout the school.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are well provided for in the Foundation Stage. A very caring environment supports children in their learning. They enter Reception with the level of attainment expected for their age, although this varies from year to year. They make good progress here and, when they start in Year 1, the majority are working well towards the goals expected of them. Very friendly links with parents and their confidence in the school mean that children quickly settle into school and its routines. Planning now shows a good balance between activities directed by staff and times for children to explore and discover for themselves. A weakness in creative development was identified and more time is now given for children to explore and use equipment and materials more creatively. Planning further identifies points for observation and assessment, so that an ongoing check is made and recorded of children's progress in the different areas of learning. Recent developments of the outdoor area have further improved the provision.

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

- Build on the new initiatives to improve pupils' attainment in writing.
- Ensure that the monitoring of lessons is more frequent and rigorous, so that a high level of teaching and learning is fully maintained throughout the school.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## 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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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

<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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

29 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet CofE VA Primary School, Reading, RG7 4HH

I am writing to let you know what I found when I visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. I spoke with many of you during my visit and you were always interesting to talk to, very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. Your school is a good school.

I liked these things the most.

- Children in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their time in school.
- You work hard and enjoy your lessons.
- You know how to keep fit and eat healthily. I am sure you enjoy your weekly walks, and the daily 'Rise and Shine' in Reception.
- The school helps you when you find learning difficult.
- The school makes sure that you are safe and well looked after.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to school are excellent. It was good to see the older ones looking after the younger ones during lunch.
- Your headteacher does a good job, and is well supported by the staff.

I have asked the school to work on the following things now. It needs to check that all lessons are both enjoyable and challenging, so that you all learn as much as possible. You need to continue to work hard at your writing so that standards get even better. The school is already helping you with this by giving you real things to write about and report on.

I did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector