

Malvern, Northleigh CofE Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	116863
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312431
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Dixon
Headteacher	Rose Carberry
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2005
School address	St Peter's Road Cowleigh Bank Malvern WR14 1QS
Telephone number	01684 574889
Fax number	01684 577549

Age group	4-11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to factual inaccuracy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Northleigh is a primary school of above average size. Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average. The headteacher has recently returned to school after maternity leave. An acting headteacher was appointed during her absence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Northleigh is a good school. Pupils achieve well and they reach above average standards; the pupils' personal development is outstanding. They reflect most maturely on their actions and the actions of others, and have a crystal clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are extremely polite to each other and to adults, and are most welcoming to visitors. Their behaviour is outstanding and they feel very safe in the school's happy Christian environment. Their excellent attendance is testimony to their thorough enjoyment of all aspects of school life.

Pupils progress well in English, mathematics and science. Their skills in writing have improved because teachers have provided more time for pupils to plan their written work. The pupils' mental mathematics has also improved but their ability to apply their knowledge of number to solve mathematical problems is a relative weakness. Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes, where they make good progress.

The pupils' good progress and learning is the result of well planned teaching. Lessons are interesting and proceed at a lively pace. Relationships are outstanding and pupils are very keen to learn and work hard. Occasionally, teachers do not make the best use of assessment information to pitch work at just the right level. This means that progress sometimes slows because work is too hard or too easy. The interesting curriculum supports the pupils' personal development very effectively. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills and drama work is of a high standard. Many visitors to school, educational visits and popular after-school clubs greatly enrich the curriculum and expand pupils' horizons. Staff use their detailed knowledge of pupils well to provide a good standard of pastoral care. Pupils with learning difficulties receive sensitive support so that they make good progress. The pupils benefit from clear advice on how they can improve their academic work and are provided with effective support to enable them to progress.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and are pleased with the standard of education it provides. One summarises the views of many, writing, 'I am very pleased with my child's progress. The school has a very supportive and friendly culture. Staff listen and do their best to resolve problems. Lessons are lively and interesting and pupils leave as well balanced young people.'

The headteacher provides the school with clear direction and this was continued by the acting headteacher during her absence. Subject leaders provide good support and staff moral is high. There are many signs that the school is improving under its strong leadership and management, while sustaining those aspects of its performance that are outstanding. This shows the school is well placed to get even better.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class so that on entry to Year 1, standards are slightly above average. Progress in creative development is especially good because children have many opportunities to develop their art, dance and music skills. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are interesting and very lively. The many practical activities engage children well. However, teachers do not always plan enough time for pupils to develop and practise their mathematical skills and progress in number development, while good, is slower than in other areas. Children enjoy their work, behave very well, readily share resources and show high levels

of respect for others. The exciting curriculum makes especially good use of the outdoor learning area to develop children's independence. There is an appropriate balance of activities led by an adult and those chosen by children. Leadership and management are good and provide a well-structured professional development programme to improve staff expertise in teaching young children. Parents are happy with the good standard of care provided and the effective programme that ensure children quickly settle into school routines.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Ensure teachers make effective use of assessment information in order to provide work at the right level.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's skills and experiences on entry to Reception are similar to those expected for their age. Achievement, including that of pupils with learning difficulties, is good and pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Girls' progress has improved and is now similar to that of the boys. This is because the school has provided the girls with more opportunities for creative work and given them greater responsibility for their learning. Progress in writing has accelerated because pupils have more opportunities to research and plan their writing through activities such as role play and reading a wider variety of text. This has greatly improved the clarity of their reports and the way pupils express their ideas and feelings in their writing. Pupils' calculation skills are good but their use and application of mathematical knowledge to solve problems and answer longer questions is less well developed. Progress in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is good because well-qualified staff teach lessons and there are many opportunities for practical work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils reflect very maturely on spiritual matters and have very high levels of respect for each other, adults and the environment. For example, they are very considerate to pupils who find tasks difficult, always encouraging and supporting them in their efforts; pupils work extremely well together in teams. They readily share apparatus and ideas and are keen to help each other solve problems. A very clear understanding of right and wrong underpins their outstanding behaviour. Pupils can be trusted to work independently, for example in the library. They have high levels of respect for the beliefs and traditions of people different to themselves.

Parents and pupils report that the very rare incidences of bullying are quickly and effectively resolved. Pupils know very well how to keep themselves safe; for example, on the Internet and through their very detailed understanding of the dangers of drug abuse. They have a real commitment to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, taking plenty of exercise and choosing the healthy options on the menu. They really enjoy all aspects of school and pupils say they will often 'struggle' into school when they feel ill because they do not wish to miss school activities. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community in their many roles as monitors, 'buddies' and as members of the well-organised school council. Pupils are proud of the many changes they have made to the school such as the improved decor in the toilets, the displays in the library and the very successful recycling programme they manage. They

enthusiastically participate regularly in cultural events in Malvern and generously support many charities, including collecting money for a school in Tanzania. Pupils' outstanding attitudes and above average standards prepare them well for secondary school and future employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use resources such as computers and games well to engage pupils and make lessons interesting. Lesson targets are clear and pupils know precisely what is required of them. Teachers plan many tasks that actively involve pupils in their learning such as role-play and research and this accelerates learning. Teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons is improving but, very occasionally, teachers do not make the best use of the information to match work accurately to the needs of pupils. When this happens, progress slows because pupils struggle, either with work that is too difficult, or begin to coast with work that is too easy. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, providing effective support for those pupils who find work in English and mathematics hard.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Christian assemblies, church services, swimming, physical education and health lessons are examples of the way the curriculum very effectively supports pupils' personal development. The curriculum broadens pupils' experiences well. For example, all pupils learn French and pupils are encouraged to converse in French during registration. The many visitors to school and visits extend the curriculum well and add to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils in Year 1 talked excitedly about the recent visit of the 'Animal Man' who brought in insects that they could hold as part of their science project. The school recognises that more curriculum time needs to be allocated to promote problem solving in mathematics. Gifted and talented pupils have good opportunities to work with their peers from other schools but there is scope to provide these pupils with more demanding work in such subjects as geography and information and communication technology (ICT). There is a wide range of well-attended clubs and sports activities that widen interests and raise aspirations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils can readily approach a member of staff if they have a problem because they know their concerns will be sympathetically and effectively resolved. Health and safety procedures and child protection arrangements are robust and regularly updated. Pupils with learning difficulties receive sympathetic support and well-structured learning programmes enable them to make good progress. The school uses visiting experts well to support pupils' personal development and learning. For example, they have trained staff to support pupils with speech difficulties and dyslexia. Academic guidance is good. In writing, pupils are given very clear targets and specific advice on how to improve their work. Guidance in mathematics is good but not of this same high standard and a minority of pupils are not clear about how they can make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development because its programme of monitoring and evaluation is rigorous. Improvement plans are effective. For example, the programme to engage and motivate girls has successfully accelerated their progress. The school sets challenging targets for pupils' standards and regularly assesses progress towards meeting them. If progress slows, the school provides effective programmes to help pupils catch up. However, targets are not consistently recorded in a way that can easily be checked. Subject leaders support the headteacher well by improving standards and progress in their areas. For example, their recent staff training has improved teachers' skills in using drama to improve pupils' skills in planning their writing. The school uses staff well to keep teaching groups small so that pupils get more individual help with their learning. The governors support the school well and work hard on its behalf. They understand data well and are robust in using this knowledge to hold the school to account over the standard of education it provides.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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?	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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northleigh C of E Primary School, Malvern, WR14 1QS

You may remember that we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you, and to see you in lessons and at play. Thank you for being so very polite and friendly. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere where you all get on so well together. We think Northleigh is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out:

- You make a good start to your schooling in Reception.
- The good teaching helps you to progress well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You behave extremely well and your attendance is outstanding.
- You have excellent relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with many exciting extra activities including visits to make your work more interesting.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do two things to help you get even better in your learning:

- Help you to improve problem solving in mathematics.
- Make sure teachers make better use of information that tells them how well you are doing to plan work that helps you all to do your best.

You can help the school by continuing to behave so well, trying your best in lessons, and continuing to attend every day.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead inspector