

Nursery Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125500
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315249
Inspection date	29 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catriona Ritchie
Headteacher	Valerie Squires
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002
School address	Ansley Common Nuneaton CV10 0PY
Telephone number	024 76392318
Fax number	024 76392318

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Nursery Hill is a small primary school situated in a former mining area. Most pupils are White British. No pupils from minority ethnic families are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. A higher proportion than average are eligible for free school meals. More pupils than usual join or leave the school at times other than the normal times. When they enter the Nursery, children's skill levels are lower than expected, especially in communication, language and literacy. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development are also lower than expected.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Pupils are proud of their school and have a positive attitude to their work because the school is a caring community that values and respects all individuals. This view is supported by both parents and pupils. One parent summarised the views of many: 'Children enjoy school, the teachers are encouraging and helpful'.

From the Nursery to the end of Year 6, pupils experience satisfactory teaching and consequently, average and more able pupils are reaching broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Their achievement is satisfactory. High numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make sound gains from their starting points.

In Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in writing are not as high as in mathematics because writing skills have not been developed well in the past. Strategies to tackle this are proving effective and current standards are improving. Progress in writing is now satisfactory because the school has focused on this since the last report. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve the expected level in mathematics and English and to meet their targets by the end of the year. Pupils throughout the school are gaining confidence and beginning to enjoy writing, and this is a marked improvement. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory. Whilst pupils develop good personal qualities and social skills, progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The creative approach to learning extends pupils' horizons through topics such as a study of the Egyptians, but it lacks a sharp enough focus to ensure all their needs are fully met, especially in writing. Opportunities to develop writing skills are sometimes missed. Teachers are organised and plan interesting lessons, but tasks are not consistently matched to the needs of all pupils. Lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have additional support and are making good progress with their learning. More able pupils are not always challenged, however, because work is not closely matched to their needs. Expectations and the pace of their learning are not always sufficient to ensure they achieve well, especially in writing.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Relationships are strong and pupils clearly know how to stay safe and healthy. They develop confidence and competence whilst participating in school activities, and they know that the school council will respond to their views. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. Procedures to track pupils' academic progress are satisfactory and pupils experience an effective level of care. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear focus and a determination to improve the school, and capacity to improve is satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of provision now focuses on its impact on pupils' progress and achievement and is leading to the right actions for improvement. The role of middle leaders is less well developed as they do not monitor in classes. There are signs of improvement and satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children develop a positive attitude to their learning in the Nursery and in Reception because they enjoy the activities

offered to them and they respond well to adults. Behaviour is good. Children make satisfactory progress and achieve well in most areas of learning, and good progress in their personal and social development, although most enter Year 1 below the expected levels. Well-planned areas such as the 'winter wonderland' help children develop their speaking skills and give them opportunities to share with others. The attractive outdoor area is used adequately to develop learning, but opportunities to develop their writing skills are often missed. Tracking information indicates that children make less progress in writing but improved use of 'Jolly phonics' is helping to give children more confidence with letters and sounds.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide better opportunities for all pupils to write more frequently and develop their enjoyment of writing.
- Plan work closely to match the needs of all pupils, especially the more able pupils.
- Develop the role of middle managers and subject leaders.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress and are on course to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In 2007, pupils did not meet their targets in the national tests and no pupils reached the higher level in writing. Inspection evidence and the school's own tracking systems indicate that the current Year 2 are on course to meet their targets at the expected level. Handwriting skills are still weak, but intervention strategies are helping pupils gain confidence in their writing, and standards are improving.

In the current Year 6, standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, given their starting points. Pupils are on course to reach their targets at the expected level in English, mathematics and science. Standards of presentation and handwriting are not as well developed as they should be. In 2007, national test results were exceptionally low in all subjects, reflecting a very small cohort, of whom over half had learning difficulties. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make sound progress but the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Parents agree that pupils are keen to learn and their behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory. The school's successful focus on the 'Six Rs' – responsibility, respect, resilience, resourcefulness, reflectivity and reasoning – is clearly having a beneficial impact on their personal development. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the 'Keep going, you can do it' phrase. Their awareness of their local community is good and pupils speak with pride and mature respect and consideration for the elderly. They organise coffee mornings for them and entertain them with songs. Their awareness of life in multicultural society is less well developed. Pupils develop confidence, social and physical skills through well-planned after-school clubs, such as football, gardening and drama. They become sensible and responsible because they have plenty of

opportunities to consider the needs of others and their environment as peer tutors, garden guides and Eco Warriors.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well organised and pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning. Strong relationships and good attitudes and behaviour contribute to a positive climate for learning. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils clearly. In the better lessons, a strong drive and determination to improve standards results in a brisk pace to learning. In a Year 5/6 class, pupils were challenged to extend their choice of vocabulary and thinking skills after seeing a film extract. In many lessons, however, too many worksheets are used, which limits opportunities for extended writing. Tasks are not consistently matched to the needs of pupils, especially the more able pupils. Teaching assistants support those who need the extra help well. The quality of marking is satisfactory but varies between subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Adults work hard to plan an interesting curriculum that pupils enjoy. Curriculum planning is satisfactory and linked well to a theme but is not always closely matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils use computers and digital cameras to enrich learning in other subjects, for example, Year 6 pupils in science. Opportunities for writing in lessons other than English are satisfactory and mathematics is used adequately in science. Curriculum enrichment is satisfactory and covers a broad range of interests. Pupils benefit from visiting authors, which is helping to widen appreciation and knowledge of different styles of writing. A wide range of clubs is popular and well attended, such as sporting clubs, bird watching and healthy cooking. Personal, social and health education is planned satisfactorily and ensures pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and be healthy. Visits to the local Hartshill Hayes are broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good relationships ensure pupils enjoy their work and develop confidence to make progress in all aspects of their school life. Pastoral support is strong because staff understand the needs of those who need the extra support. The school is supported well by outside agencies. This is appreciated and acknowledged by parents. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils receive good support, which contributes to their growing confidence. Pupils' welfare and safeguarding procedures are robust. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Challenging targets are set and pupils know their targets but support for the more able pupils is less well developed. Marking is too variable and does not always challenge pupils enough to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is well organised because the headteacher ensures it runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. She is clear about what needs to be done to move the school on and there are signs of improvement in the provision and standards of work seen. Subject leaders are enthusiastic but their role in monitoring their subject is insufficient. The school has improved its tracking and monitoring procedures since the last inspection and pupils' progress and achievement are more clearly monitored. These are helping the school to identify the next stage for development. The school improvement plan reflects the school's awareness of the issues that need to be addressed and the strategies to bring about greater effectiveness. It is closely linked to issues identified in the last report. These measures have now started to bring about improvement. Governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and they offer good support but are insufficiently rigorous when challenging the school.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

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

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nursery Hill Primary School, Ansley Common, Nuneaton CV10 0PY

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and coming to your assembly. We agree with you that Nursery Hill is a happy school. Your outdoor area is an attractive and interesting place to learn.

These are the things that we found during our visit to your school.

- You make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards for your age.
- When you first come to the school in Nursery, you make a sound start to your education and you enjoy the activities offered.
- You are taught satisfactorily.
- You all enjoy school, behave well and like learning.
- You enjoy all the out-of-school activities, trips and visits. These all help to make learning fun.
- Your headteacher and all the staff work hard to make sure that the school continues to improve.

What we have asked the school to do next.

- Improve standards in writing throughout the school and give you more opportunities to write and enjoy your writing.
- Ensure all teachers give you challenging work at the right level so that you learn as quickly as you can, especially those of you who manage the work easily.
- Give your senior teachers more opportunities to monitor what you are doing and to contribute more to the running of the school.

You can all help your teachers make these improvements by continuing to work really hard, especially in your writing. Thank you for a very enjoyable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace Lead inspector



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