

# Nythe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126249
<b>Local Authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	315456
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Lake

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	146
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sharon Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Henham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Nyland Road Nythe Swindon SN3 3RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 524024
<b>Fax number</b>	01793 528009

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: attainment and achievement, especially in mathematics; the achievement of more able pupils; the impact of initiatives to improve behaviour; and the impact of leadership and management on improving achievement. 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 smaller than average school has changed a lot recently. Over half of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, has changed in the last two years. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, although broadly average, has risen recently, although none are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language (EAL). The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Significantly more pupils than average enter or leave the school part way through their school career. Attainment on entry to the school is in line with that normally expected of children of this age overall, although children's communication and language skills are below those normally found.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding elements because of the way that all staff work together as a team, dedicated to improving the quality of learning. Leadership and management are good and improving as the headteacher provides outstanding vision and energy to guide the whole staff and support them through continuous professional development.

From starting points on entry to the school that are in line with typical expectations, pupils do well to attain above average standards in Year 6. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Progress in personal development is particularly good, ensuring that children start Year 1 well prepared for learning. Nevertheless, their communication, language and literacy skills remain below average. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2, although standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing. The school has lifted standards in writing in recent years because detailed analysis of pupils' performance, through improved use of assessments, has guided teachers in setting appropriately challenging and realistic targets. Even though a significant number of pupils, especially boys, enter Year 1 with limited skills in writing, standards at the end of Year 2 are significantly above average because so many make good progress. The school is applying the same process to mathematics where standards and achievement are improving. However, few of the most able pupils achieve as well as they can.

In Key Stage 2, progress continues to be good and pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, as in Key Stage 1, the school has recognised that although more pupils than average reach expected levels, not enough of the more able pupils attain the higher levels. It recognises that the challenge for more able pupils across the curriculum should be increased.

The good progress made by pupils results from good teaching. Teachers know what they expect pupils to learn and their clear explanations make pupils confident about tackling their work. The consistently good, and often outstanding, teaching in Year 6 is spreading across the school as teachers work as a team to share their expertise and help improve learning. Good use is made of information and communication technology to make lessons interesting. Teachers know how to motivate and stimulate pupils to learn. They know just when to let pupils work things out for themselves and when to prompt them through good questioning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because they are supported well by competent teaching assistants and, when necessary, through the school's strong links with external agencies. At present, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage remain satisfactory, as they were at the last inspection. Marking, although generally rigorous and helpful, is not consistent throughout the school, especially in Key Stage 1.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being comes as a direct result of the high quality provision for this within the good curriculum. Pupils know how to stay healthy and are very proud of the organic garden where they grow their own vegetables. They participate eagerly in sport and have a good understanding of how to stay fit. Pupils particularly appreciate the many high quality activities that take place outside the school day. They know how to stay safe because of the good guidance they receive and they make a good contribution to the school community through the many responsibilities they undertake. The preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is excellent. As well as the high academic standards, pupils benefit from the way in which they are encouraged to be entrepreneurial, for example in fundraising to

support children in Africa. This also makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance has improved recently as a result of the school's efforts and is now average. Although the majority of pupils behave well, behaviour overall is satisfactory as a small minority find it difficult to sustain concentration. A recently introduced behaviour management policy is already improving this, but it is too early to see the full effect.

The school has reviewed the curriculum and developed initiatives through close involvement with a group of other local schools seeking to improve curriculum provision. This has resulted in a good quality curriculum that meets pupils' needs more effectively, and supports pupils' personal development extremely well. Classrooms are bright and attractive places where pupils' work is valued through good quality displays that reflect the rich variety of activities and exciting learning opportunities provided. It is obvious why pupils enjoy school so much and are achieving well. 'The school has an excellent (out of hours) activity programme' and, 'my son would go to school on a weekend if he could' are typical of parents' comments. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and recognises the need to provide more challenge, through curriculum provision, for the most able pupils. Further modification to the curriculum is currently taking place to deal with this. Care, guidance and support are good. The school has good quality procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Those with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well. The effective systems for checking how well pupils are doing are used well to help pupils improve their achievement, although more could be done to guide the most able pupils in achieving as well as they can. Leadership and management are good. The school has effective procedures for looking at itself and has accurately identified what works well or what needs to improve. Subject leaders work with senior management effectively to raise standards. Governance is good. Although there are many new governors, there are effective procedures for ensuring succession and continuity. Governors provide good support and hold the school to account well. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the way the school is managed and recognise the clear improvements taking place. Nevertheless, a small minority feel that communication between school and home could be improved. Given the clear and significant improvements that have taken place over recent years, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall, provision is satisfactory. Most children reach the expected standards at the end of the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy, and a significant minority do better, especially in personal social and emotional development. This represents satisfactory achievement from children's attainment on entry. All areas of learning are covered adequately and there is a suitable balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through purposeful play. Children settle in quickly, have positive attitudes, and learn to relate well with others. The care provided by adults is good and helps children to feel secure and confident. Evidence from assessment data and observation shows that teaching and learning and leadership and management are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. A strength of the Foundation Stage staff is the way all adults are particularly effective in promoting children's personal development, ensuring children start Year 1 well prepared for learning. However, children's progress is sometimes restricted because the language targets set for them and the use of language around the classroom are not matched closely enough to their needs. Consequently, some opportunities are missed to extend children's language and literacy skills, and these remain below average when children start Year 1.

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

- Improve children's progress in Foundation Stage, particularly in communication, language and literacy to match the good progress found elsewhere in the school.
- Raise standards in mathematics at age seven to match the high standards found in reading and writing.
- Increase the challenge for the most able pupils so that they achieve as well as they can.

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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	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	1

### 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

14 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nythe Primary School, Swindon SN3 3RR

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school and for telling me so much about the school. You helped me find out a lot. Here are some of the things that I liked.

- Yours is a good school because everybody works together well to help it improve.
- By the time you leave school at age eleven, standards are higher than in most schools, and very good in English.
- You are making good progress in your learning and standards are getting better because of the good teaching.
- You told me that you enjoy school because the teachers make learning interesting. I agree. I think that the school gives you many interesting things to do that make a very good contribution to your personal development, especially the after school clubs.
- You know how to stay safe, eat healthily and keep fit. I thought your organic garden was excellent.
- You do a lot to help around the school such as helping younger children at playtimes and making suggestions through the school council.
- Your school is as good as it is because the leadership and management are good, and your headteacher has a very clear vision of how good the school can become. All the staff and governors are working together well to make the school even better.

To help you learn even better I have asked the school to:

- improve the progress that you make in the Reception class, especially in your language skills
- help you get as good in mathematics at age seven as you are in reading and writing
- help those of you who are more able to achieve even higher standards. You can help by telling your teachers when you find work too easy.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake Lead inspector