

# Nene Valley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133537
<b>Local Authority</b>	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
<b>Inspection number</b>	316144
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Messer

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	167
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Megan Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stuart Mansell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Sugar Way Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE2 9RT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 897517
<b>Fax number</b>	01733 898451

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This new school was opened in 2003 and since then has been growing steadily as the new housing development it serves expands. At present it is smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2006 and recently a new deputy headteacher was appointed. New pupils arrive frequently and the school will soon be full. Most pupils are from White British families and around a tenth are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of pupils speak languages other than English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The school has a Healthy Schools award, the International School award and Investors in People accreditation. Attainment on entry is typical of children of this age.

## 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. It has significant strengths and pupils' personal development is outstanding making an excellent contribution to effective learning. New pupils settle happily and soon find their feet because school routines are well established and everybody knows exactly what is expected of them. They have an excellent understanding of how to eat sensibly, keep fit and lead healthy life styles. They develop excellent social skills, talk sensibly about their work and are sensitive to the needs of others. The school has placed great emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and the success of this initiative has made a strong contribution to developing pupils' self confidence. They are articulate and express their views clearly. Pupils from different backgrounds mix happily together and there is a strong sense of racial harmony. Pupils enjoy accepting responsibility and the school council is becoming increasingly active in supporting school improvement. Pupils develop a good range of key skills to support their learning in the next phase of their education.

Teaching and learning are good and so pupils achieve well. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Learning targets are displayed in each classroom and these help pupils to understand what they need to do to reach the next stages in their learning. These targets are framed for three broad ability groups in each class and do not always match the specific learning needs of all pupils, especially the faster learners who are not always sufficiently stretched by their targets. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and friendly and support learning well.

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a good range of fascinating educational visits, many after school clubs and interesting visitors. Music is developing as a strong feature and sport has a high profile. Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and parents greatly appreciate the warm welcome that new pupils receive.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher gives outstanding leadership. He has analysed the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately and has produced an extremely detailed school development plan that gives clear direction towards improvement. The governing body, ably led by the chair, monitors the school's performance closely and is becoming increasingly involved in school improvement. The headteacher has begun to introduce good procedures for establishing the amount of progress that pupils are expected to make from Reception to Year 6 and for measuring actual progress against such expectations. The system is still in its infancy and is not yet used to pinpoint exactly who is not making enough progress and precisely where extra support might be needed. Finances are managed well and the school provides good value for money. Resources are excellent. The new building and the grounds promote an exceptionally good climate for learning. Resources to support information and communication technology (ICT) are outstanding but their potential to support teaching and learning is still being explored. The school is poised to make further advances and has good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils have challenging targets for learning in English and mathematics, especially the faster learners.
- Develop a system for measuring pupils' progress frequently so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and appropriate extra support provided.

- Make more effective use of the excellent ICT facilities to support teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children settle happily in the Reception class where teaching is good so they all achieve well. Most are on course to attain the levels children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good and so all groups of pupils continue to make good progress. By Year 2 pupils attain standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was reflected in the national assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2006. Pupils' attainment, especially in Years 3 to 6, is affected by high levels of inward mobility as a constant stream of new pupils join the school. Some have only been attending the school for a few weeks and few have completed the full Key Stage 2 in this school. As a result the learning of a significant number of pupils has been inconsistent and progress has been patchy. Nevertheless, the school's results in the national tests in 2006 were above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who transfer into different year groups at various points through the school year, settle happily and often make exceptionally good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

This is an outstanding feature of the school. Those pupils who have settled well and are the established core of the school community warmly welcome each one of the numerous newcomers. One new pupil summed this up, 'I wake up every morning at six and the first thing I think is how much I love going to this school. It's so friendly but it wasn't like that at my last school'. Attendance is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually by, for example, reflecting quietly about the world in which we live. Pupils are courteous and their behaviour is excellent. The school works hard at building self-esteem and one parent whose child recently joined the school echoed the views of many, 'He believes in himself and has definitely gained confidence since being here'. Pupils know how to look after themselves and stay safe.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say that they learn effectively because teachers make lessons fun. Teachers are good at motivating pupils. This is partly because relationships are so warm but also because lessons are carefully planned to excite pupils' curiosity and capture their imagination. There is some innovative and imaginative teaching, for example, chair drumming in Year 4 where chairs are used inventively as drums by pupils to produce intricate rhythmical patterns. Interactive white boards are often used well by teachers to add interest but their full potential to support learning has yet to be realised. Carefully designed displays of work and eye-catching illustrations help to make each classroom an inviting and stimulating learning environment.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good because it provides a wide range of learning opportunities that interest pupils and make learning exciting. The curriculum is enriched by special learning weeks such

as the recent 'Brain Awareness Week' when all pupils studied how the brain works and experienced different learning styles. One key feature of the curriculum is the 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' programme which helps pupils to reflect on their development. There are good links with the nearby health centre. Pupils in the Reception class enjoyed talking to doctors and nurses about their work whilst the older pupils benefit from the school nurse's expertise when she supports the sex and relationships programme. Pupils learn about ecology and how they can help to look after our planet. They fully support the school's recycling initiatives. They thoroughly enjoy their Italian lessons. The school has made a good start at linking subjects together to create a stimulating curriculum that meets pupils' needs and interests but this is still work in progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school that supports learning well. Ensuring the safety of pupils is given the highest priority. Child protection procedures are fully in place and are understood clearly by all staff. Pupils say they feel secure in school. There is a good personal, social and health education programme. Pupils receive clear guidance about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. They say that they feel well supported by all staff and would feel comfortable about sharing problems or concerns with their teachers. Academic guidance is good. Pupils are given good advice through teachers' marking of work and discussions about how to improve. Targets for learning are often too broad and do not give individuals clear guidance about the steps they should take to reach the next stages.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership of the school has successfully established a vibrant climate for learning. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning closely. He has gained the confidence of staff, parents and pupils. He gives clear educational direction to the work of the school. The leadership roles of other staff are still developing. Staff are all eager to further improve the quality of teaching and learning and are striving to raise standards even higher. Governors are closely associated with the school and give good support. The governing body has successfully resolved the issues raised in the last inspection report. The school is well prepared to make further advances. It is on the threshold of opening the last of the seven classes that it was designed to have and is looking forward to a more stable period in terms of pupil intake now that it is nearing its full capacity.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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

15 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Nene Valley Primary School, Sugar Way, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 9RT

What a lovely school! I thoroughly enjoyed my short visit. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful. The building looks so modern and colourful. The grounds have been developed well and the whole learning environment is so inviting that those of you that I spoke to agreed that they were very lucky to be able to go to such a lovely new school.

I think that there are many good things about the school. Firstly you are all so friendly. There has been a constant stream of new children joining the school and they say that they really appreciated the warm welcome they received when they first arrived. Lots of your parents wrote to me to say how impressed they were by the way new children are helped to settle in quickly and soon feel part of the school family. You are very sensible and your behaviour is excellent. You work hard and enjoy learning new things. You always do your best and so you make good progress in your learning. You are very good at reading, writing, mathematics and science. You use computers confidently to help you with your learning. Many of you are becoming really good at learning to speak Italian. You are good at art, music and sport. I thought that the chair drumming performed by Year 4 was wonderful. You know how to stay safe and look after yourselves. Your new headteacher gives excellent leadership. All the teachers and support staff are keen to make the school even better and to make your lessons even more exciting.

I have asked Mr Mansell and the school governors to think about setting each one of you clearer targets to aim for in literacy and numeracy and to measure your progress frequently just to make sure that everybody is learning as much as possible. You have excellent ICT resources but I think that you could use computers and other technology, such as video cameras, even more to help you with your learning. I think that the school is well on the way to becoming even better.

I wish you every success in the future.

John Messer

Lead inspector