

North Nibley C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115695
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326251
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	David Edwards HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Eames
Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Freeman
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2005
School address	The Street North Nibley Dursley
Telephone number	01453 542600
Fax number	01453 542600
Email address	head@northnibley.gloucs.sch.uk

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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). The inspector visited nine lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, governors, staff and groups of pupils, including the school council. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, the school's tracking data, pupils' work in books, and minutes of the governing body. He considered the responses to 34 questionnaires completed by parents.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage and the progress children are making
- the impact of strategies to support pupils' personal development and well-being
- the impact of assessment and monitoring on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils, particularly in writing
- what progress has been made in developing leadership and enhancing governors' awareness of their roles and responsibilities
- evidence that teaching had improved since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

North Nibley is a small Church of England aided school which serves a rural community. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Most children who begin the Early Years Foundation Stage have had some pre-school learning experience. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

North Nibley is a good and improving school. Some aspects of the school's work, such as the provision for physical education, are already outstanding. Pupils' attendance and their overall spiritual, moral social and cultural development are excellent. Pupils benefit from outstanding specialist teaching which also promotes good attitudes to learning as well as their personal development and well-being. This enthusiasm was demonstrated by a Year 6 pupil who, during a well-attended early morning exercise club, said, 'This is really fun and it gets my heart going! I love the wind on my face to cool me down.'

At the heart of this successful school is a headteacher dedicated to promoting the highest levels of care, welfare and education for all pupils. She has worked assiduously with her staff and governors to raise standards and achievement for all. Consequently, there is a clear vision for continuing the school's success by focusing on strategies that will sustain school improvement. The governing body is well led and fully supportive of the headteacher. Appropriate training has allowed governors to become increasingly influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. They monitor the work and progress of the school effectively. As a result of the improvements and work of the headteacher and governing body, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

By the time pupils leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 their attainment in English, mathematics and science is well above average. This is because assessment information is used effectively by teachers in planning lessons so they can provide for the learning needs of each pupil. Rigorous systems to monitor pupils' rates of progress are well established and as a result, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress in their learning, relative to their starting points. This represents good overall achievement.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly to routines because of the good care provided by the school. They enjoy their learning in a safe and stimulating classroom. Assessment information gathered from observing children's learning is used satisfactorily to plan further learning experiences. Consequently, children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning by the time they enter Key Stage 1.

The curriculum ensures an appropriate focus on the development of basic skills and offers many excellent opportunities to participate in sporting and extra-curricular

activities. Teaching is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teachers understand the needs of their pupils well and provide stimulating lessons that engage and maintain their interest. The regular use of assessment ensures pupils make rapid progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils' progress in these subjects is carefully monitored and actions taken in these subjects ensure work is well matched to their needs. However, this good assessment practice does not currently extend into other curriculum areas. In addition, the marking of pupils' work, although supportive, does not involve pupils in assessing their work as effectively as it might. Consequently, although most pupils know their targets for literacy and numeracy, they are less clear on how to improve their work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage from satisfactory to good by ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to build on children's existing knowledge and understanding so that they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Extend the good assessment practice currently embedded within the four core subjects to all areas of the curriculum.
- Involve pupils more in assessing their own work at Key Stages 1 and 2 so they can gain a clearer understanding of what they need to do next to improve.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

2

Pupils achieve well in the classroom and their enjoyment is evident in all that they do. Pupils make good progress in lessons because teachers carefully match learning to the needs of individuals. In 2008, Key Stage 1 results were well above the national average, which reflects the consistently good teaching provided in Year 2.

Unvalidated test results for the end of Key Stage 2 show that the majority of pupils continue to build on this good provision and sustain good progress in their learning to achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The effective analysis of pupils' work in these subjects and the strong teaching that is characteristic overall within Key Stage 1 and 2 ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress in these core subjects, relative to their starting points.

Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for and enjoy the wide variety of activities on offer during the school day. In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour is good and attendance is outstanding. Pupils are well informed about personal safety. They know why healthy eating is good for physical health and have many excellent opportunities to exercise and develop a wide range of sporting skills as a result of the school's outstanding physical education provision. Pupils are well mannered at all times and considerate to one another. The 'buddy' system run by older pupils to help new children settle into the school life is very effective in supporting pupils' general well-being. Pupils understand right and wrong and possess a strong sense of

responsibility which is evident through fund raising and participation in community events and local festivals. Links with the parish church are particularly strong and contribute effectively to the personal development of pupils. The school ensures there are regular opportunities for all pupils to participate in and appreciate the spiritual life of the church community. The Christian ethos of the school is highly valued by the majority of parents.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

The quality of the school's work

Teaching is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers plan lessons together and share their expertise effectively across year groups. Their good subject knowledge allows for flexible teaching which is readily adapted to suit the needs of pupils. Boys and girls make equally good progress in their learning. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are deployed effectively to support individual pupils and small groups. In all classes, pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT is carefully assessed each term. The school uses this information effectively to extend higher attaining pupils as well as to put in place effective intervention strategies to support lower achieving pupils where necessary. As a result, the progress made by both groups of pupils is good overall. However, this good practice does not extend into all areas of the curriculum. Leaders acknowledge this is an area for development. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work independently and collaboratively in lessons. For example, in a Year 5/6 philosophy class, pupils demonstrated advanced thinking skills and planned effectively together to prepare insightful questions for debate, such as: 'If we are due to come out of the recession in 2010, why can't we come out now?'

The involvement of pupils in assessing their own work at Key Stages 1 and 2 is in the early stages of development. Although pupils' work is marked diligently by teachers,

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

pupils do not always understand what they need to do next to improve. Pupils' progress is shared regularly with parents at regular times throughout the school year.

The school makes good use of partnerships with other organisations to enhance provision, for example, in offering specialist music and physical education teaching as well as an extended range of extra-curricular opportunities and participation in regional competitions.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have successfully overcome the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. In particular, leaders have ensured the work of the school has effectively raised pupils' achievements and improved their understanding of cultural diversity within British society. Under the caring leadership of the headteacher the learning needs of all children are swiftly identified and prioritised. Together with governors the headteacher consistently communicates high expectations to all staff and pursues ambitious strategies for continual improvement for all groups of learners. The chair of governors shares these high expectations. He has established good communication with senior leaders and ensured governors are appropriately trained to fulfil their roles. This allows governors to exercise influential support and appropriate challenge in determining the strategic and long-term direction of the school. The school development plan is detailed but occasionally over complex. Priorities are consistent with the school's data and monitoring outcomes, although targets are less well defined. The school's effective work to promote equal opportunities is illustrated in the way it ensures there is no significant difference in boys' and girls' attainment.

The school regularly seeks the views of parents and pupils and acts upon their suggestions. Regular newsletters have improved communications with parents and most families appreciate this. Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are robust. The school takes its health and safety responsibilities seriously and provides a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils. Appropriate checks are made on all adults who work within the school and a single central record of such checks is maintained and updated at the recommended intervals.

Significant work has been done since the previous inspection to promote community cohesion and in particular pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society. Through links with schools in other parts of Britain they overcome the particular challenges associated with living in a rural environment. The school is constantly re-

evaluating its work in this area. Consequently, pupils are gaining a good understanding of the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of Britain through the enriched curriculum, visitors to the school and trips out to places of interest.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy to be in Class 1 because their welfare is a priority and they enjoy the learning activities planned for them. Most children start school with skills and knowledge levels that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning, which prepares them appropriately for the challenges of the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Children's personal development and well-being are good. They listen carefully and carry out instructions as directed. For example, children showed good levels of concentration and enjoyment when taking turns to weigh and mix ingredients to make buns for a party.

Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning because the use of assessment information to build on children's existing knowledge and understanding when planning learning activities is less well developed. The teaching of early reading is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff plan together to cater for the wide range of abilities within the class. Children learn new sounds and their link to letters at an appropriate pace, but this phonic knowledge is not always consolidated and built upon to good effect because other planned activities sometimes interrupt the flow of children's learning. As a result the pace of learning is slower than it could be. Some child-led activities lack direction because they do not always have a clear learning focus and adults do not intervene quickly enough to move learning on. The learning environment is well resourced and organised to provide an appropriate balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated learning. However, access to the outdoor environment is underdeveloped and children do not make use of this resource as well as they might. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic and highly motivated to strengthen provision and improve children's progress. She has undertaken appropriate training and development in order to create a supportive learning environment in which all children feel secure.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3

Views of parents and carers

Just over 30 completed questionnaires were returned, representing approximately half of the 75 families that make up the school community. The majority of respondents were happy or very happy with the school. In particular, parents appreciate being part of a small, caring school that provides good personal development for pupils within a strong Christian ethos. 'North Nibley is a wonderful nurturing community.' 'The children are respectful, considerate and creative.' 'Communications are better and as a parent I feel more involved.' 'My child is happy in school and for me this is the most important thing.' These comments, written by parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, reflect the views of the overwhelming majority of parents, who support the school and are very happy with the progress their children are making. The dedication of the headteacher and her staff is regarded as a strength of the school, along with the very good extra-curricular activities on offer to pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils,



Inspection of North Nibley C of E Primary School, Dursley GL11 6DL

Thank you so much for the warm welcome that you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit and valued the opportunities I had to talk with you and see you in your lessons. In return, I want to tell you what I thought of your school. I have decided yours is a good school. Indeed, some things about your school are outstanding, such as your attendance and your spiritual, moral and social development. You also have many excellent opportunities to take part in physical activities. I could see for myself how popular your PE lessons are by the good number of you that arrive before school starts to take part. Well done!

Your headteacher cares very much about you all, not just about raising the standards of your work, which are now good, but also about ensuring you grow up with excellent personal skills that will help you in the future to enjoy life and contribute well to your community. I was impressed with your good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning.

You told me you know about how you stay healthy through regular exercise and a healthy diet. I was particularly impressed with how you look after one another at playtimes through your 'buddy' system. This understanding, along with your good literacy and numeracy skills, means you are being very well prepared for your future. You are also very good at finding ways to help others, through fundraising and participating in local festivals.

I have suggested to the leaders of your school three ways they might help improve your school further. They are:

- Ensure the youngest children in your school are provided with learning activities that will really help them to make good progress in all they do.
- Enable teachers to keep track of how well you are doing in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Involve older pupils more in assessing their own work so they can gain a clearer understanding of what they need to do next to improve.

Yours faithfully,

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector

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