

Nunney First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123657
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327955
Inspection date	25 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Anna Sketchley

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	81
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	19
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Webb
Headteacher	F Griffey
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Catch Road Nunney Frome BA11 4NE
Telephone number	01373 836429
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Nunney First School is a small village school and pupils attend from a wide area including the neighbouring town of Frome. All pupils come from a White British background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection. A privately run Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pre school is situated on site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Nunney First School is a good school. Leadership and management are effective and as a result pupils are achieving well and standards are rising steadily. At the heart of the school's procedures is a tracking system that tells teachers on a regular basis how well pupils are progressing towards challenging targets. The school quickly identifies those pupils in need of help and allows teachers to put strategies in place to address pupils' difficulties. Since the last inspection, a real team spirit has evolved between the new teachers, headteacher and governors and the whole school community is committed to improving achievement and raising standards further. The school works exceptionally well with outside agencies, especially other small schools in the area and the local authority. This is enabling it to provide a wide variety of curriculum opportunities for pupils and expert training for teachers and governors, all of which is ensuring that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Pupils join the school with skills expected for their age and make good progress during their time in the EYFS Reception class, especially in the development of their communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills. However, the outside area for EYFS does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to develop as well as they might in areas such as knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical aspects of the EYFS curriculum. Good progress is maintained with pupils usually achieving well throughout Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 although tasks for some of the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always sufficiently challenging so they do not make as much progress as they might. The school has already identified this, especially in reading, and plans are being implemented to secure improvement with some signs of success. By the end of Year 4, standards are above the range generally expected for this age group.

The school has a delightful family feel that both pupils and parents really appreciate. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their praise for the outstanding pastoral care that pupils receive. Relationships are excellent between adults and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. Within this atmosphere, pupils develop confidence and a very positive attitude to learning so that their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils know how to keep healthy and clearly feel safe in school. They are well behaved and polite and enjoy school to the full, showing great enthusiasm for learning and all the school clubs and extra activities. It is no wonder attendance is good. Teachers praise pupils regularly and they respond eagerly to the team system with points for good work and behaviour. Pupils take a real pride in their work and as they grow older it is beautifully presented.

The school is fully committed to being an important part of the village community. Parents remark that Nunney is a 'small school that really cares about the children and the community'. Pupils are involved in improvements to the school building and in considering the needs of the local community. Involvement with the wider community is not so well developed. Although links with a school in China have currently foundered, the school is trying to re-establish these, and in addition, to extend links with schools nationally. There are positive signs but at present with new initiatives not having time to have full effect, the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a settled start in Reception because the school has good induction procedures and links with the pre-school setting on site. Relationships with parents are very good and they are fully supportive of learning activities, especially work on letter sounds which is sent home regularly. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress and any issues of concern and they appreciate the safe and secure setting that Reception provides. Personal, social and emotional development is strong. This is evident in children's confidence, the way they work together, choose and put away resources and the excellent relationships they make with all those around them. They behave well and handle equipment carefully and safely. Teaching is stimulating and the classroom provides a good range of learning opportunities. Careful observations by adults result in thorough planning that meets the individual needs of each child. The outdoor learning area does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to be inquisitive and to develop fully in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical aspects of the curriculum. The school has already identified this and plans have begun to address the issue. These young children are well cared for and make good progress because EYFS is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are sufficiently challenged in lessons, especially in reading, so that they reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Ensure that the outdoor learning area provides more stimulating opportunities for children to develop fully in knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical aspects of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school has successfully addressed a two-year dip in standards in reading, writing and mathematics and they are now rising steadily. Strategies the school has put in place to improve writing are particularly effective, especially for boys. The progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 has accelerated. It is now good and most are on course to meet their targets and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of this academic year. However, the school realises that a few more able pupils are not doing as well as they could, especially in reading. Plans to address this issue are in the early stages of implementation. School data show that pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4. In Year 4 they are working above the expected range for their age and are on course to exceed the age-expected Level 4 by the time they finish Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and make a good contribution to the school community through their forum and involvement in projects such as the new toilet facilities they have helped to design. Pupils are well aware of how to keep safe, look after one another well, and care for younger children when acting as playground buddies. They know who to go to if there is a problem and are very confident about the help they will receive. They have a clear understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle through healthy snacks and regular exercise. Pupils'

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They demonstrate this through the friendly way in which they get along together and their concern for others. They engage particularly well with the local community by being involved in such activities as distributing harvest produce to the elderly and understand the benefit of, and enjoy, joint activities with other local small schools. Their understanding of the wider, global community and the cultures and beliefs of others is satisfactory. Pupils' good literacy, numeracy and computer skills, together with their personal attributes, prepare them well for life in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The excellent relationships that abound throughout the school create a positive climate for learning for all pupils so that they are very keen to participate in lessons, listen to the teacher, concentrate and behave well. Teachers make a special effort to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. They have good subject knowledge and their questioning skills encourage pupils to explain their answers. They teach with confidence and engage pupils successfully, ensuring that they understand what they are to learn in the lesson. Interactive whiteboards are well used, for example to teach fractions. Pupils are involved in assessing their work to gauge how well they have learned at the end of the lesson. Planning is thorough and meets the needs of most pupils although tasks for the more able are not always challenging enough so that they do not make the progress they could. Teaching assistants are highly valued by staff and pupils and used effectively to support the needs of the less able and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Detailed planning for literacy and numeracy and carefully selected strategies to help pupils acquire good writing and calculation techniques is making a significant contribution to raising standards. The school has identified the need to plan a more creative curriculum to ensure that these skills, along with more opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT), are practised in other subjects. However, this is still at a very early stage of development and yet to have full effect. There is good enrichment for pupils both within and outside of the school day through a wide variety of clubs, visits and visitors, some planned with neighbouring schools. Opportunity to take part in, for example, the school's chamber choir, allows pupils to make a valuable contribution both to their own development and within the community as they join to sing with other people. Personal, social and health education is promoted well through special programmes, with positive effects on personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All pupils are exceptionally well looked after and nurtured in a safe and secure environment. One parent commented, 'The school gave my daughter a lot of support when she needed it and as a consequence she is now blossoming.' Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and fully included in all that the school offers.

Although pupils receive clear guidance in lessons about what they are to learn and are helped to judge whether or not they have succeeded, not all of them have individual targets that would

help them understand how to take the next steps in their learning. In some cases, teachers' marking is exemplary and explains in detail what pupils can do to improve their work but this is not consistent across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Led by the unstinting energy of the headteacher, the highly motivated teachers have worked exceptionally hard to improve successfully achievement and standards since the last inspection and they are determined to build on this further. Governors make a significant contribution to the work of the school, as they challenge it to do its best and offer continuous support on a regular basis. Accurate self-evaluation and the monitoring of subsequent actions have led to good improvements in key aspects of the school's work. The school has good action plans in place drawn from appropriate priorities but these are not yet sufficiently linked to its challenging targets to raise achievement and standards. This makes it difficult for the school to measure the degree of its success.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Nunney First School, Nunney, BA11 4NE

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking with you. You are involved in many exciting activities and your school provides you with a good education.

These are some of the good things we found.

- You work hard at school and make good progress.
- You enjoy school very much and appreciate all the extra activities the school provides for you.
- Those of you in Reception are making excellent progress in settling into school life. All through the school, you are being very successfully helped to grow up as sensible young people.
- You know how to keep healthy and safe.
- You care for one another, get on very well together and your behaviour is good. Well done!
- You and your parents told us how well the school takes care of you and we agree that this is excellent.
- Your headteacher, teachers and all the other adults lead your school well. They make sure that the teaching and curriculum are good.

We have suggested two things to make your learning even better.

- We have asked your teachers to make sure that the outdoor learning area provides those of you in Class 1 with more ways for you to learn about the world around you.
- We have also asked your teachers to make sure that those of you in Years 1 and 2 who are already good at your work have more challenging tasks to do so that you will reach even higher standards, especially in reading.

Keep working hard!

Yours faithfully

Anna Sketchley Lead inspector