

Napier Community Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118425
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	358345
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Helena Evans

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 of pupils on the school roll	487
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Wildey
Headteacher	Zerina Slade
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 20 lessons and 18 teachers were observed. Discussions were held with groups of pupils, including school councillors, as well as staff with key responsibilities, and representatives of the governing body. In addition to observing the school's work the inspectors evaluated documentation such as safeguarding, policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress. Parents' and carers' responses, as recorded in 74 questionnaires, were analysed as well as those from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- the attainment and progress made by pupils in the Reception Year and throughout Key Stage 1
- the impact of strategies to address standards of attainment and progress at Key Stage 2
- the extent to which teaching, the curriculum and assessment systems meet the needs of different groups
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in reviewing the quality of provision and evaluating the success of the actions being taken to accelerate progress.

Information about the school

Napier Community Primary and Nursery School is a larger than average-sized primary school. It draws the majority of its pupils from the local community. Most pupils are White British, but the school's population is made up of a quarter of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is also less than average although the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. These pupils, mainly, have speech and language difficulties. There is a high level of mobility caused by numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times. Most of these pupils speak little or no English. Children begin the Nursery in the term following their third birthday. The Early Years Foundation Stage has two Reception classes, but children are often taught as part of an integrated unit. All other classes are taught as single-age classes. The school provides an on-site breakfast club, for all age groups, and a variety of after-school clubs. The school holds a number of national awards including basic skills, inclusion, continuing professional development, International Schools award and healthy schools.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This school provides pupils with a satisfactory education. There is a variety of strengths, especially in the way staff care for the emotional and social needs of each pupil. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have identified clearly what is required to improve. Systems are in place to ensure raising standards and these are central to the work of the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage has well-established initiatives that are raising levels of achievement and consequently children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Nursery and Reception Year. The headteacher is well supported by her senior leadership team and staff know and understand the vision for the school. Developing the monitoring of success by middle managers is an area for development. Systems that have recently been introduced have not yet had the full impact required to secure sustained improvement in attainment and progress, especially in reading writing and mathematics, and so capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory rather than good.

Children's skills levels on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are low. The trend in attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has been significantly below average for several years. Currently, progress has begun to accelerate in parts of the school and especially so in Year 6 because of the good teaching in this year group. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but attainment, despite some improvement, is still below average. Pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are making the same satisfactory progress as the rest of the school. The coordinator is making more use of pupil tracking data, but as yet, across the school, such information has not been used sufficiently well to tailor provision for all pupils' specific needs and there has not been enough attention given to additional support in mathematics. Teaching ranges from some that is inadequate to some that is good and is satisfactory overall, with some good examples, especially in the Reception Year, Year 5 and Year 6.

Much good work with families is improving links between school and home and is resulting in better attendance and more pupils arriving in school on time. Attendance is now above average. However, there is a minority of pupils who are persistently absent and this is hindering pupils gaining the skills that they need for their future well-being.

The curriculum contributes satisfactorily to pupils' learning and progress. A strong feature of the school's provision is the wide range of interesting enrichment opportunities, for example the healthy workshop, the ambitious projects planned by the 'eco squad', and the family art workshop which was well attended during the inspection. This contributes well to pupils' achievement and enjoyment. Parents and carers are appreciative of the school especially of the way it keeps their children safe and the

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positive caring atmosphere in the school. There were several written comments from parents and carers, for example: 'The care from the teachers made the transition into school worry free and happy'; 'The school provides excellent extra-curricular activities'; 'My child is happy and enjoys going to school and is motivated to achieve the best he can'; and 'I know I can contact the school and issues will be dealt with'.

This is an inclusive school where pupils are encouraged and supported to play their full part. Pupils show good spiritual, moral, social and local cultural awareness. The school is welcoming and all pupils from different backgrounds get on very well with each other. The curriculum provides a good understanding of different cultures and religions and there are good links with schools in contrasting contexts both nationally and internationally.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, making sure pupils do not underachieve by eliminating inadequate teaching as a matter of urgency and ensuring that all teaching is as consistently good as that in the best lessons.
- Make more effective use of assessment data by:
 - ensuring that programmes of work and intervention programmes are tailored more precisely to the different needs of pupils to avoid underachievement and accelerate progress
 - improving the use of assessment to inform planning so that work is carefully matched to all pupils' capabilities and builds on their existing skills
 - ensuring that pupils know and understand their individual targets and are given opportunities to assess their own progress at the end of lessons
 - providing pupils with more effective written and oral feedback from teachers which clearly informs them what they need to do to improve, and time is given for them to respond to feedback in lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders at all levels by:
 - ensuring that senior and subject leaders have the skills, support and opportunities to improve the quality of teaching and learning and that there is a shared understanding among the staff of what good progress and learning look like
 - applying ongoing rigorous monitoring and evaluation focusing on eliminating inconsistencies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Effective routines ensure that pupils settle well and in the majority of lessons there is an eagerness to learn and participate actively. In a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, there was a high level of engagement because the pace was brisk, pupils were well supported

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by practical activities that met their needs and challenged their thinking, and the lesson provided opportunity for them to apply skills they had learned in previous lessons. However, this is not the case in all lessons with a negative impact on pupils' progress.

The school has a clear focus on improving progress. Standards of attainment are rising at the end of Key Stage 2, but they have been significantly below the national average over a period of years. The school's national test results are negatively affected by the movement of pupils in and out of the school at other-than-normal times, pupils' low starting points and too much teaching which is less than good across the school.

Children in the Nursery and Reception Year make good progress. They reach Year 1 with learning and development that are broadly average. Teachers do not always build effectively on the skills pupils have learned in the Reception Year and so some pupils do not make the progress they should. Although pupils make good progress in lessons in Years 5 and 6, this is not enough to address previous underachievement. In the 2010 tests for Year 6, girls' attainment was particularly low, especially in mathematics.

Overall, boys did better in mathematics, but attainment was below the national average. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress through the school. The school has supported the development of writing and as a result the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in English with more pupils achieving the higher level 5 than in previous years. However, this has been to the detriment of mathematics where progress made by the pupils was below average between 2009 and 2010.

The highly effective family liaison officer has made an important contribution in raising attendance rates and reducing the number of occasions that pupils arrive late to school. This makes an important contribution in removing the barriers to learning for many pupils.

The way pupils are being shown how to apply their basic skills prepares them satisfactorily for future life. Pupils are well mannered and respectful of each other. This is as a result of a clearly understood behaviour policy which is consistently applied by all staff. Pupils, clearly, feel safe in school and are well aware of how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils who speak English as an additional language integrate well into mainstream classes.

Pupils have the opportunity to contribute to the day-to-day running of the school, for example through being 'play time buddies' and on the school council. While they make a very positive contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and are very proud of the responsibilities they hold, links with the wider community are less well developed. There are opportunities for the pupils to engage in a variety of extra-curricular clubs which are held at different times of the school day, for example chess, which is a morning activity. Extra-curricular provision promotes healthy lifestyles effectively and makes a positive contribution to learning and pupils' enjoyment of school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school teaches pupils in ability sets in mathematics and English in Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6. Where teaching is good, pupils are benefiting from this targeted teaching and this is beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning and progress.

Good relationships between adults and pupils, and teachers' effective behaviour management are strengths and clear indicators that pupils are well cared for. These enhance pupils' ability to engage with their learning.

Since the last inspection the school has developed assessment and tracking procedures that enable staff to monitor and demonstrate where pupils are making progress. Because data are used more systematically, there is a good understanding of the current attainment in each class and year group and the progress made by each pupil each year. This is now helping them to set challenging targets at the end of each year and at the end of each key stage. This is beginning to show an impact in support becoming more targeted where there are greater areas of need. However, assessment data are not yet used to full effect by all staff and planning does not always take account of all pupils' needs, with work not always presented to cover the full range of abilities in either class lessons or sets. Marking is variable, does not provide adequate guidance for pupils and is not focused well on the pupils' targets, which are too broad and not reviewed rigorously enough by the teacher or pupil. Consequently, not many pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work. This limits their progress.

Tasks for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are often not matched to their skills and the work provided is a simplified version of the main lesson or the

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same with additional adult support. Because the lesson and resources are not tailored to their needs and despite the best efforts of teaching assistants, the pupils' learning is restricted. For example, in one lesson, pupils with weak literacy skills were asked to use information texts to extract key information, but they were unable to read the leaflet.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and increasingly relevant for all pupils. There are good opportunities for enrichment through theme weeks, visits and visitors. There are good cross-curricular links in information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy. The school has identified the need to review the skills progression in topic work to ensure that activities are planned to build on prior attainment. This is particularly the case for mathematics and science. Where links are not strong and where planning does not take adequate account of previous experiences, the pace of learning is restricted.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision of the strategic direction of the school. This is shared and understood by the senior leadership team and governing body, who are all committed to raising standards of attainment and accelerating progress.

Since the last inspection the school has introduced effective systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. This has led to a greater involvement and accountability of staff. The school is now well placed to ensure that swift action can be taken to address underachievement. Challenging targets are being set at whole-school level and for individual pupils and the school improvement plan focuses on raising achievement. Members of the senior leadership team play an increasing role in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school is good at ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities and there is no discrimination. For example, pupils new to the school who are at the early stages of learning English are well catered for through the effective support provided by the inclusion team and the play zone project. The school places value on developing partnerships with other schools and agencies to enhance pupils' educational experiences. The school has good links with a local secondary school where enrichment opportunities are provided for pupils identified as gifted and talented.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are working with middle leaders to develop their skills to enable them to actively engage in monitoring and evaluation activities and this has been identified by the school as a priority. The governing body gives its full

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support to the school. It is kept well informed and, through its monitoring and evaluation programme, has planned and frequent opportunities to review key aspects of the school, for example through 'deep dive' days which focus on a particular strand of the school's development and enable time to be spent with the coordinator. It holds the school to account and this good practice is developing fast as it is helped to use pupil progress data even more effectively to evaluate the impact of provision. The governing body takes effective responsibility for safeguarding issues. The inclusion governor has a clear overview of policy and practice, which is reviewed frequently. The governing body ensures that the vetting of statutory requirements for risk assessment and child protection are fully met. As a result of good management procedures, pupils are safeguarded well. The school demonstrates a clear commitment to promoting community cohesion and this provision is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children have a positive start to their education. The majority of the children attend the Nursery and this supports their transition into the Reception class very effectively. Induction for other children is good enabling them to settle quickly. This is because of the good care provided by the staff. Their attainment on entry is below what might be expected at this age. This is especially the case with speech and language. The children make very good progress in personal and social development. They work well together, show good levels of independence and take responsibility for tidying away equipment after use. The children have developed effective habits for healthy lifestyles through self-regulating the snack time. The children show a keen interest and understanding of

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their world because the learning environment provides a wealth of opportunities for exploration and creativity.

The quality of teaching is good and this, with good leadership, ensures that the curriculum is well planned and meets the different needs of the children effectively. The staff have a good knowledge of learning and development of young children and work closely together to plan an interesting curriculum that is informed by daily assessment of the children and takes account of their interests. Teachers have high expectations and children are challenged well. This is laying a good foundation for their continued success as they move through the school.

Children enjoy the range of learning opportunities provided for them. The integrated unit incorporates the six areas of learning effectively. There is an appropriate balance of teacher-led activities and child-initiated activities, and a free flow to the learning opportunities in the outside classroom. Clear routines are well established, children demonstrate high levels of independence and move safely around the different learning bays. Behaviour is good. The large space available for the children to learn affords many benefits, but the school is aware that the outdoor area does not fully reflect all areas of learning and that, on occasions, drawing children together from the different areas for focus groups can take considerable time.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Typically, parents' and carers' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were positive. A large majority of parents and carers say that their children enjoy school, feel safe and are given opportunities to develop a healthy lifestyle. Inspection evidence confirms this. A very small minority expressed concern that the school does not always deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that there are effective strategies in place to deal with challenging behaviour and that behaviour is good. A very small minority also expressed concern that their children are not making enough progress. Inspectors found that, overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress by the time they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2, but in the past there are some pupils for whom progress has not been satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Napier Community Primary and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 487 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	68	23	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	54	32	43	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	38	42	57	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	46	35	47	5	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	50	39	53	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	43	36	49	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	47	36	49	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	38	36	49	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	45	36	49	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	35	36	49	6	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	34	41	55	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	50	32	43	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	49	36	49	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Napier Community Primary and Nursery School, Gillingham ME7 4HG

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed speaking to you, visiting your lessons and looking at your work. The reason for our visit was to decide what kind of education you are receiving. As well as watching your lessons and looking at your books, we looked also at the information the school has about your learning and progress.

We found that your school takes good care of you and gives you a satisfactory education. There are some things about the school that are good. We can see that you get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception Year, that you feel safe in school and that adults in school care well for you. We judge that your headteacher, senior staff and the governing body ensure that you often learn a lot in lessons. Many of you say that you enjoy the opportunities available to you after school, for example the family art workshop which was held after school this week. We are pleased that you enjoy taking increased responsibility in school and were interested to hear about the work of the eco squad and your plans to raise money for a solar panel for your school!

We have asked your headteacher and governing body to concentrate on several main things:

- ensuring that there is always good teaching throughout the school so you make good progress with lessons which are planned carefully and at the right level to help you learn well
- improving the way teachers use what they know about how you are getting on to set targets that will help you make better progress and reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- improving the way teachers responsible for subjects find out how well things are going.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helena Evans

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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