

Noremarsh Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	126250
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	381197
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Chris Grove

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Cook
Headteacher	Andy Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2008
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Chris Grove

Additional inspector

Rachel Goplen

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a group of parents and carers, members of the school's staff and with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) of which inspectors could take account in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development planning and documents relating to monitoring, safeguarding and the curriculum. Inspectors analysed inspection questionnaires returned by 77 parents and carers, as well as those completed by 159 pupils.

Information about the school

Noremarsh Community Junior is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British, and others come from a mixture of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, principally specific or moderate learning difficulties, is also below average. The school is accredited with the Healthy School status and the Eco Schools (Bronze) award. In 2011, the school met the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement.

- The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate, because of pupils' inadequate achievement. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in English and mathematics was above average, but since then it has declined and largely been broadly average. Pupils made inadequate progress from their starting points in each of the last two years, especially in English. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' progress is currently typically satisfactory with occasionally good progress being made where teaching is good.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good, especially in Year 6. Despite some evident strengths, there are weaknesses in the quality of teaching, and in the use of marking and target setting, which limit their impact on pupils' progress, particularly for lower ability and more able pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety is a strong aspect of the school. Pupils behave well, are polite and courteous and attentive in lessons. They cooperate well in class. They feel safe and supported at school. Pupils say that cases of bullying are few, and they are effectively handled. Attendance has risen to above average.
- Staff and the governing body share, and are acting upon, the headteacher's ambitious vision and plans for the future of the school as demonstrated in pupils' satisfactory progress, sustained good behaviour and improvements to the curriculum which is broad and balanced.
- The outcomes from self-evaluation are having an increasingly satisfactory impact, but, when monitoring lessons, leaders do not focus sharply enough on judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. The school's

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tracking information is effectively used to pinpoint where interventions would benefit individual pupils. However, it is not used well enough to track the progress of specific groups of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, especially in Years 3 to 5 and in English by:
 - ensuring that teachers set consistently higher expectations of what pupils should achieve
 - improving the consistency of guidance to pupils about how to improve their work, particularly in marking, so that it regularly indicates the next steps in their learning
 - making more rigorous use of learning targets.
- By December 2012, raise to at least 80% the proportion of good and better teaching, by:
 - making sure that lessons are consistently well paced, and make good use of time
 - ensuring that all groups of pupils, especially boys and the more able, are challenged by tasks that are well matched to their learning needs and make good or better progress in their learning.
- Ensure greater impact from the school's self-evaluation activities through:
 - a sharper focus on judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress when leaders monitor lessons
 - communicating what teachers need to do to improve pupils' progress
 - improved use of the school's tracking information in order to monitor more effectively the extent of progress made by different groups of pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

When pupils enter the school, their attainment is typically above average. In recent years, attainment in mathematics and in English, including reading, has mostly been broadly average by the end of Year 6. One important reason for this is that fewer more-able pupils reached above-average standards than is the case nationally, especially in English. However, national assessment results show that there was significant improvement in pupils' attainment in mathematics in last year.

The great majority of parents and carers believe that their children's needs are met, and think that their children are making good progress. However, inspectors judge that pupils' achievement is inadequate because too few pupils, particularly boys and higher attaining pupils, progress as well as they should over time, especially in

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English. In a session of guided reading, pupils in groups taught by the teacher and the teaching assistant made good progress in responding to questions that developed their comprehension skills well, but pupils who worked more independently completed tasks which offered insufficient challenge. Similarly, in a mathematics lesson, pupils of different levels of ability were given a range of tasks about doubling two- and three-digit numbers. However, the higher attaining pupils found their task too easy, and were insufficiently challenged by the work.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils sometimes make better progress in their learning. For instance, in a 'Big Write' lesson, where pupils had the opportunity to write more extensively, all groups of pupils progressed well. This was because they had good opportunities to plan the sequence in their story and were clear about the teacher's high expectations for careful presentation and handwriting. They also knew the criteria for successful work, such as using striking vocabulary, similes and correct punctuation. Pupils also had to bear in mind an improvement point from an earlier writing task, and the need to check and to edit their work. Because of the challenging nature of the work, they focused intently on their tasks, and applied themselves keenly. The quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, because regular assessments lead to a wide range of additional support programmes for them.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers consider that teaching is good. Inspectors found that, although some teaching is good, overall it is not better than satisfactory, because it is not resulting in consistently good progress for the large majority of pupils.

Teaching and learning are well supported by the respectful relationships between adults and pupils. This creates the school's positive atmosphere for learning. As a result of teachers' high expectations about pupils' behaviour and moral development, there are few occasions when they need to set boundaries in managing their pupils. However, expectations for pupils' achievement and their rates of progress are less well established across the school, though in the best lessons, high expectations are clearly in evidence. The good impact of the 'Big Write' initiative was evident when pupils composed a piece of extensive writing to a background of classical music, which supported their concentration well, and which also contributed positively to their cultural and spiritual development.

Another aspect of good teaching is the brisk pace to learning, and good use of time. In the short time before a first lesson, one teacher had already provided an opportunity to complete early morning work on spellings, and had held a discussion about ways in which pupils could improve their homework, in the light of their experience of mock national tests. As a result, pupils were alert and responsive in the lesson that followed. Such judicious use of time and a rapid pace to learning are evident in only a minority of lessons. Planning for English and mathematics lessons regularly includes matching tasks to the learning needs of different groups of pupils.

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However, in practice, the 'match' is not consistently good. On occasions, lower attaining pupils are set a task which is not well adapted for them, but more frequently it is the higher attaining pupils who are insufficiently challenged. In a science lesson about push, pull and twist forces, for instance, pupils were given a good opportunity for discussion with the teacher. However, the writing task was too limited and not matched to pupils' different abilities, which represented a missed opportunity for more-able pupils to apply their literacy skills and to be challenged to record their understanding of forces.

Teachers' use of marking and target setting is inconsistent. Some marking offers praise and encouragement, but also helpfully points out how pupils could improve their work. However, in other instances, pupils receive too little good guidance about desirable improvements to their work. Although there are arrangements for teachers to set individual targets for pupils in writing and mathematics, the impact is limited because pupils say that they cannot recall them. Targets are not helping to direct pupils sufficiently clearly towards the next steps in their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school is good. Their good conduct is well supported by the school's calm atmosphere. In the playground, pupils move around sensibly. They say that they are safe and secure and are confident to talk to an adult if ever they feel unsafe. They heed the outdoor playground rules. For example, pupils who feel lonely or distressed at break times can enlist others' support by using the 'friendship stop'. Pupils are also quick to help others if they fall over. They believe that the school is good at helping them to feel safe, for example through 'Hector Protector', a device that removes inappropriate internet material.

Almost every respondent to the survey of parents and carers agreed that their children feel safe in school. Most held that there is a good standard of behaviour at the school, although a few believe that lessons can be disrupted by bad behaviour. In their observations, and in discussions about typical behaviour with a group of pupils, inspectors found no evidence of poor conduct, nor did they hear any testimony which suggested that there was much bad behaviour.

Pupils say that teachers or midday supervisors address the few incidents of bullying effectively. In the survey, most pupils thought that the school deals well with all types of bullying. A large majority of the responses from parents and carers were also positive in this respect, although a very small minority expressed some dissatisfaction with the school's treatment of cases of bullying. There have been no racist incidents in the last two years. Effective action has raised attendance to above average, and further reduced the rate of persistent absence.

Leadership and management

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The ambitious vision for the school is demonstrated through effective planning for school improvement, and the careful evaluation of the actions taken. The headteacher leads a clear drive for improvement. Other leaders, and notably subject leaders for English and mathematics, offer good support, for instance through the effective introduction of the initiative to improve writing standards and the implementation of a well-devised calculation policy, designed to ensure greater consistency in achieving progression in pupils' calculation skills. Curricular improvements have been underpinned by appropriate professional development opportunities for staff. The governing body is committed to the school and works closely with the leadership team to develop a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Through their willingness to be a 'critical friend' to the school, governors provide a satisfactory degree of challenge.

There are regular lesson observations to check the quality of teaching. However, there is not a sharp enough focus on judging the extent to which the teaching leads to good progress by pupils, or on ensuring that the feedback to teachers includes clear advice about how to further accelerate pupils' progress. Other self-evaluation arrangements, including the system to track pupils' progress, are well established. Information from the tracking procedures is used well to plan additional provision for those with special educational needs or who are falling behind. This demonstrates the school's commitment to the promotion of equality. However, the school is less effective in monitoring and judging the extent of the progress of different groups of pupils.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and ensures that pupils' needs are met. Pupils are interested by the current whole-school topic work, 'From Pole to Pole, Arctic and Antarctic', which enables them to apply skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, in particular, in studying the geographical theme. The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is encouraged, for example, through the current topic and their moral and social development is well supported by the school's high expectations for behaviour.

The capacity for further improvement is demonstrated through the various successful actions taken to improve boys' standards in writing, a key issue in the previous inspection report. Resolute action has led to significant improvement in standards in mathematics, which is evident in the most recent national test results. The school has also improved attendance and sustained the good behaviour of the pupils since the last inspection. The school ensures that safeguarding arrangements are robust. Key subject and other middle leaders have a positive impact on sustaining improvements. Pupils' good behaviour, good readiness to learn and their above average attendance, which has risen over the last three years, also attest to the effectiveness of the actions of the school's leadership team.

Glossary

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.
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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

27 January 2012

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Noremarsh Community Junior School, Wootton Bassett
SN4 8BT**

Our thanks to all of you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at breaktimes and lunchtimes. These are the main things that we found out about your school.

- Your behaviour at school is good, and you cooperate well with other pupils.
- You have very good relationships with teachers and other adults.
- You feel very safe in school.
- The teaching and the curriculum in your school are satisfactory.
- The headteacher and the other leaders know what to do to continue to improve your school.
- Most of your parents and carers would recommend the school to others.

However, your school is not as good as it should be, and you are not all making the progress you should. We have therefore given your school a 'notice to improve' and asked it to make some important improvements. Other inspectors will make more checks in the future to ensure that things are getting better. We have asked the headteacher and the governing body to make the school even better by doing these things:

- Raising your achievement, especially in Years 3 to 5 and in English, by making sure that all teachers expect more of you and by making better use of marking and target setting to help you improve your work.
- Increasing the amount of good teaching by setting a good pace to learning and ensuring tasks set are suitably challenging for all of you, especially boys and those of you who find learning easier.
- Making sure school leaders focus more on judging how well you are making progress when checking on teaching and making better use of information about how well different groups of you are doing.

You can all help by continuing to work hard so that the school can improve even more. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove
Lead inspector

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