

# North Molton Primary School

Fore Street, North Molton, South Molton, EX36 3HL

**Inspection dates** 27–28 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The action taken to improve teaching through robust monitoring and the effective setting of targets for teachers has led to rising standards.
- Nearly all pupils make good progress, many from below expected starting points.
- Standards are above average at the end of both key stages.
- Most pupils read and write well.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Almost all pupils are enthusiastic about learning and clearly enjoy school.
- Nearly all pupils' behaviour is good and pupils are polite and well mannered.
- Older pupils have very good social skills and carry out their responsibilities effectively.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and there is no bullying; parents agree.
- Attendance is well above average.
- The headteacher, senior management team and governors provide effective leadership with high expectations for the further improvement of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing, for a small number of boys in Years 4 and 5, is currently below that which is usual for their age and abilities.
- Teachers in Key Stage 1 do not always ensure that a small group of boys who find it difficult to concentrate have a clear idea of what they need to do or the boundaries placed on them in lessons. Their social skills have not been sufficiently developed to enable them to interact with others appropriately. Consequently, this group makes progress at a slower rate than their peers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and members of the school management team. The inspector took account of comments submitted by the local authority by email.
- The inspector also took account of the 22 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documents and evidence about behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Stephen Dennett, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than most primary schools.
- There are significantly more boys than girls in some year groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional funds (the pupil premium) is average.
- The number of pupils identified as disabled or with special educational needs is above average, as is the proportion supported on school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been a number of staffing changes, including the appointment of two temporary teachers from September 2012.
- Three- and four-year-olds are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage class (North Molton Penguins), which is integrated with the rest of the school and run by the same governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attainment of boys in Year 4 and Year 5 in writing to at least the expected level for their age by making sure they make better progress overall by:
  - ensuring that their handwriting is neat, joined and legible
  - making sure they improve the presentation of their work in all subjects
  - improving the accuracy of their spelling and punctuation.
- Remove barriers to learning for, and increase the rate of progress of, the few boys in Key Stage 1 who find it difficult to concentrate by:
  - ensuring that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do in lessons
  - ensuring they know the boundaries placed on them when working on their own or in small groups
  - developing their social skills so that they are able to interact appropriately with other pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the school with skills that are below those expected for their age, although, as year groups are small, there is some variation from year to year. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress through the school, and by the time they leave in Year 6 their attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Any gaps in learning between different groups of pupils have been tackled rigorously and, as a result, have been closed for almost all groups of pupils.
- Although overall there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, a few boys in Years 4 and 5 make slower progress in writing and standards are below the expected level. The school has put measures into place to remedy the problem, but it is too early to judge whether these have had an impact on standards.
- Most groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium, make better progress when compared to pupils nationally. Nearly all disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils communicate well and speak clearly and with expression when explaining their work in lessons. They can clearly explain their working of complex problems in a numeracy lesson, for example.
- Most pupils read well and widely, so standards of reading are above average at both key stages.
- Standards of writing develop well through the school and pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are generally good in most classes. However, this is not the case for the small group of boys in Years 4 and 5, whose handwriting and spelling require improvement.
- A small group of boys in Key Stage 1 also make slower progress than their peers because they do not always understand what they need to do or the boundaries placed on them when working alone or in small groups.
- Young children use a good range of vocabulary when discussing the giant in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, for example. Older pupils write for a wide range of purposes and standards of spelling are generally good.
- Pupils' numeracy skills develop well across the school because most pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. Younger pupils have good basic skills, which they use effectively in a variety of situations to solve problems.
- Older pupils are adept at manipulating numbers and often make rapid progress in lessons. They confidently use a number of different methods to solve problems involving brackets, for example.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is almost always consistently good, with some examples of outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2, particularly in numeracy. However, some less effective teaching in the past means there is a small group of boys in Years 4 and 5 who have not made as much progress as they could have in writing.
- The pace of lessons is nearly always brisk, so that learning is rapid and pupils quickly acquire new skills.
- A wide range of interesting activities motivates pupils to learn and teachers use effective strategies to develop pupils' social skills, including the imaginative use of technology. For example, pupils in Year 6 searched the internet effectively to find images of Jesus as part of their religious education project.
- All teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to develop

pupils' skills in literacy. They provide a wide range of activities that promote pupils' vocabulary and confidence when speaking. Pupils in Year 4 explained their reasoning clearly in a numeracy lesson, making good use of the correct mathematical vocabulary.

- There are a few occasions when teachers in Key Stage 1 do not provide a small group of boys with poor concentration with clear enough directions, so that they find it difficult to work properly with other pupils. When this happens there is some low-level disruption that distracts other pupils. The school has taken steps to address the issue by providing more support and guidance for these pupils and this is now beginning to have a positive effect.
- Reading is promoted effectively through guided reading sessions and individual help for pupils who need it.
- Other adults make a valuable contribution to learning by supporting pupils in small groups that take place outside the classroom. This has had a very positive effect on standards in reading, for example.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs well in lessons. They have tasks that are well matched to their needs and actively engage them in learning.
- Information on pupils' progress is used well to ensure that work is carefully matched to pupils' different abilities, with the result that nearly all pupils make good progress.
- Marking is supportive and clearly tells pupils the next steps they need to take to improve their work and to move on to the next level. Homework successfully builds on what pupils have learned in lessons.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school over time, especially in Year 6, where it is frequently exemplary. These pupils are very confident individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Nearly all pupils have positive attitudes to work and enthusiastically join in lessons; mathematics is a particular favourite. This is because the subject is taught in an engaging and imaginative way.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered and there is a very welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. The youngest children are particularly interested in visitors.
- The school has good systems for managing pupils' behaviour, which is very effective in the majority of cases. Pupils appreciate the awards and stickers they get for good behaviour. Pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties are supported well.
- It is evident from records of incidents and exclusions, which have been very low, that pupils' behaviour has been maintained at a good level over the last three years.
- All pupils spoken to had a good understanding of the different kinds of bullying, such as cyber bullying and racist comments, and were insistent that there was no bullying in the school. They also said they felt safe.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection agreed and this was endorsed further by responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Attendance has been well above average for the past two years. Nearly all pupils arrive to school on time and the incidence of persistent absence is negligible.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors consistently communicate high expectations and an ambition to see the school improve. All the issues raised by the last inspection report have been dealt with effectively.
- As a result of concerted and effective action by members of the governing body and the senior management team, teaching is now consistently good and inadequate teaching has been

eliminated.

- Leaders use performance management and training well to promote good teaching. Individual teachers' points for development are closely matched to the school's targets, as well as teachers' training needs.
- The school has effective procedures for evaluating its performance and consults widely with pupils, staff and parents. Detailed analysis of pupils' performance is used to set challenging targets for improvement, as well as ensuring that pupils are working at an appropriate level.
- The school has a well-thought-out strategy to promote literacy that ensures that all teachers are sufficiently well trained to deliver the curriculum effectively. Regular training in the local 'learning community' (a group of schools) helps to ensure that good practice is shared at all levels.
- A well-constructed curriculum provides a range of interesting activities that are well matched to the needs of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Learning is supported well by an imaginative range of field trips and residential visits.
- The curriculum is effective in promoting positive behaviour and a good understanding of health and safety. For example, pupils know how to use the internet safely. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, including a good emphasis on sport and the arts. Religious education and personal, social and health education are particular strengths.
- The school places a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, so that no groups are disadvantaged. It has ensured that the curriculum and the building have been adapted appropriately so that all pupils have equal access to all the school has to offer.
- The school works well with parents. Some parents were particularly appreciative of the school's support for the mothers' and toddlers' group.
- The school works effectively in partnership with other school and organisations, including the local church and the Methodist chapel. There are effective links with secondary schools and pupils in Year 6 are very confident about moving on to their new school at the end of the academic year.
- The local authority consultant supports the school and the governing body appropriately.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - challenges and supports the professional management of the school effectively through a well-conceived programme of monitoring visits
  - helps to establish priorities for improvement and has contributed effectively in dealing with inadequate teaching by using the appropriate procedures and appointing new staff
  - has made good use of the pupil premium to help pupils to overcome most barriers to learning and raise their achievement
  - ensures that effective sub-committees oversee all aspects of the school's work and that the school meets statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding. The governing body also ensures that resources, including financial resources, are used effectively.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113163
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	405452

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Flagg
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Grant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01598 740343
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