

Marshwood Church of England Primary School

Marshwood, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 5QA

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school. Select

- Since the last inspection the pace of improvement has been rapid. Pupils' attainment has risen dramatically, and is currently above average in Year 6. All pupils make good progress from their starting points, and some make outstanding progress.
- Teaching is always good with some that is outstanding. Pupils are consistently challenged with tasks that meet their different needs.
- A strength of the teaching is the dialogue that has been established between teachers and pupils in the marking of pupils' work that ensures pupils always know how to improve.
- The headteacher's expertise, coupled with her exceptionally strong leadership, shown since joining the school three years ago, has developed a very strong whole school team. The staff all share a commitment to improving the quality of teaching, and to become an outstanding school.
- Governors have become much better informed, and have improved their skills, offering a good level of challenge as well as support.
- Pupils enjoy school because learning is made exciting. As a result, attendance is high. Behaviour is excellent and pupils get on extremely well together. Bullying is unheard of and pupils say they feel very safe in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The rapid rise in attainment and progress has yet to be sustained over time, and has yet to be supported by more outstanding teaching across the school.
- Teachers' knowledge of pupils' understanding during lessons is not always used to rephrase questions or reshape tasks to aid learning.
- Some pupils do not always have enough understanding of strategies to help them solve their difficulties when working independently.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons, observing three teachers and one higher-level teaching assistant. The headteacher accompanied the inspector to all lessons.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including pupils' work, systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, and the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. The lead inspector spoke to a member of the local authority who has been supporting the school.
- Questionnaires from members of staff were analysed. The inspector took account of the views expressed in 18 on-line responses from Parent View and during informal meetings with parents before school.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes, Reception with Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 together and Years 5 and 6 together.
- There are no disabled pupils in the school at the present time.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action and school action plus is average. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special needs.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium (extra money given to schools by the government to support, amongst others, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups or for whom English is not their first language.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it moves from consistently good to outstanding by:
 - refining questioning in lessons, checking that pupils always know and understand what they need to do, and reshaping tasks during the lesson if necessary
 - ensuring that pupils have strategies to manage their learning when they come up against difficulties experienced when working independently, for example what to do when unable to spell a word, understand an instruction or when requiring further information.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children usually join the Reception class with levels of knowledge and skills that are to be expected for their age, but this can vary. Sometimes knowledge and skills are below expectations, particularly in communication and language, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, because provision is good, children make good progress.
- Reception children thoroughly enjoy learning their sounds, as during a game they enthusiastically look for sounds and bring them to the teacher and use their knowledge of letters and sounds as they learn to write. They are also able to count to ten without hesitation whilst learning to estimate, and some can confidently subtract numbers larger than one. Children make excellent use of opportunities to practise controlling their fingers by playing with construction toys, as they eagerly explain about the models they are making.
- By the time pupils reached Year 6 in 2012 their standards were significantly above average, and exceptionally high in mathematics, with some pupils performing at two levels above the national average. In the current Year 6, standards are not quite so high because more pupils have particular learning needs, but they remain above average. Attainment in reading is above average in both Years 2 and 6. All groups of pupils make better than expected progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils, especially those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress.
- Progress is good throughout the school because teaching is now consistently good with some that is outstanding. Literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well taught and opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills across a range of subjects. This was shown, for example, in a Years 3 and 4 science lesson where pupils ably used their writing skills to record their findings while learning about shadows.
- The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils understand the importance of being a good reader. Pupils enjoy reading, choosing from a wide selection of books as they become more competent. Younger readers use their knowledge of sounds well when coming across unfamiliar words. The most-able pupils read fluently and with great expression from texts appropriate for their age. Teachers take every opportunity for practising reading skills, always encouraging pupils to read aloud the learning objective for the lesson and the related success criteria.
- Less-able pupils are included in learning in a number of very effective ways. Highly skilled teaching assistants, as well as teachers, support groups of less-able pupils during lessons, and they are paired with more-able pupils when appropriate. Some pupils benefit from classroom 'survival skills' which help them to know what to do if they are finding work challenging.
- Pupil premium funding has been used successfully through the provision of additional one-to-one teaching, so that the attainment and progress of those eligible are nearing that of the majority of pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Excellent relationships abound between teachers and pupils, and behaviour is managed exceptionally well. Involving pupils in their own learning plays a very important part in the good progress pupils make, gives rise to exemplary behaviour in lessons, and makes a very strong contribution to their successful personal development.
- Almost all pupils work hard and remain focused even when working independently. However, because tasks are challenging, pupils occasionally get stuck while working on their own. Some do not have sufficient strategies to use to help them solve difficulties for themselves before asking the teacher. This occasionally slows the pace of their learning whilst they seek help.
- Every lesson begins with a clear learning objective followed by success criteria for pupils to use

so that they are always involved in assessing their own learning. Marking in books using the 'achieve and target' system is impressive and consistent throughout the school, and is used across all subjects. This method creates an on-going dialogue between pupils and teachers, and is very popular with pupils who say that it definitely helps them to improve their work.

- Pupils speak highly of the way they are taught, saying, 'We do lots of small tasks before we do a big piece of work.' This enables them to learn the skills before attempting the main task. A good example of this was seen in Years 1 and 2 when pupils were introduced to different ways of asking questions to find out information about clockwork toys before writing an explanation. This method of 'bite sized' learning was especially appropriate for the less-able boys who were particularly keen to write because the stimulus was interesting and appropriate for them.
- Teachers' questioning skills are good but, very occasionally, as the lesson progresses, teachers do not refine their questioning sufficiently to find out and check exactly what pupils know and understand. This means that sometimes they miss the opportunity to reshape a task, and pupils do not make quite as much progress as they might.
- Pupils' social development is supported very well by the many brief opportunities the pupils have to discuss their learning with their talk partners, which also ensures a good pace to lessons. Their spiritual, moral and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through, for example, regular discussion about the 'value' for the term.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Carefully kept records over time show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and where they have occurred they have been dealt with positively.
- During the inspection pupils were extremely polite and well mannered and behaved exceptionally well, both in lessons and around the school. That this behaviour is typical is very well supported both by the views of pupils and their parents.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including that involving the internet and the use of mobile phones. Because of the thorough work the school does annually during anti-bullying week, pupils are confident they know how to deal with bullying, saying they would tell a teacher or 'consult with friends' should it ever occur. However, pupils, and their parents, say that there is no bullying within the school and they feel very safe.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop good social skills are a strength of the school. They really enjoy the wide range of responsibilities they are given, from presenting a power-point presentation to governors as members of the school council to carrying out recycling through the Eco committee, writing a report by the Year 5 and 6 pupils for the parish magazine once a month and looking after the younger children as playground leaders.

The leadership and management are good

- Since joining the school three years ago, the headteacher has worked determinedly, with the school evaluation partner, to successfully improve teaching and learning and raise standards. After a period of considerable disruption to staffing, a strong and stable team is now in place.
- The headteacher rigorously uses the national teaching standards to manage teachers' performance. Identifying areas for development, both at school level and individually, providing training opportunities wherever necessary and setting challenging targets for pupils' progress, have significantly raised the quality of teaching.
- Although the expertise and drive of the headteacher are at the forefront of the school's recent success, ensuring that learning initiatives are fully implemented, especially in English and mathematics, is a shared responsibility and teachers evaluate and monitor their subjects well.
- Tracking pupils' progress and regular discussion with teachers ensure that the leadership is constantly aware of issues affecting individual pupils, so that any pupils in danger of making

insufficient progress are immediately offered help.

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is exceptionally well organised. Ways of helping them are innovative and thoughtful. As a result, most make outstanding progress and all make similar progress to that of all other pupils.
 - The school's success is as a direct result of the headteacher's expertise in sharp self-evaluation, accurately identified priorities and her ambition to take everyone along with her in the search for improvement. Because of what they have already achieved together, the whole school staff and governors know that becoming an outstanding school is within their capabilities, demonstrating a very good capacity for further development.
 - The curriculum provides a creatively organised and exciting four-year rolling programme for different subjects across the mixed-age classes, providing good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. A particularly wide range of interesting visits enhances learning, and a wide selection of after-school activities, including Eco, art and ICT clubs and various sports, contributes well to pupils' personal, social and health education.
 - Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional, as vividly seen in a dynamic assembly about truthfulness, the school's 'value' for this term. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed singing in parts.
 - Links have been established with schools in Dudley and Exeter to develop pupils' understanding of the different cultures that exist in modern Britain today. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
 - The school benefits from strong links with other local schools, such as joining in an 'away day' to the sea for Years 3 and 4, and by taking part with several local primary schools in studying religious education through the theme 'Harvest of the Sea'.
 - Equal opportunity for different groups of pupils is promoted well, and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously. Regular training and thorough monitoring ensure that very high standards of safety are maintained.
 - The vast majority of parents are fully supportive of the school and many speak very highly of it.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors' skills have improved considerably since the last inspection. The governors have attended many courses and are now far more knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development, playing an active role in effectively monitoring its work and challenging it to improve. By using the headteacher's thorough reports on pupils' progress and making regular visits to lessons, they keep abreast of the school's performance and raise any concerns in relation to the national picture. They possess a wide range of personal, business and educational skills which they use to good effect, keeping a watchful eye, for example, on school finances. The governors have approved the plans for how the pupil premium is spent and have a good understanding of how initiatives such as using one-to-one teaching helps identified pupils to achieve as well as they can. Governors ensure that correct priorities are set for the headteacher's annual objectives, and that performance is rigorously assessed. They also have a good understanding of the management of teachers' performance and salary progression and have supported the headteacher in its use to improve the quality of teaching.
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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

Unique reference number	113806
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	401391

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Allsop
Headteacher	Helen Whitehead
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 June 2010
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