

# North Marston Church of England School

School Hill, North Marston, Buckinghamshire, MK18 3PE

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Good leadership of teaching and learning by the head teacher, together with effective management of teachers' performance, has ensured that teaching is consistently good. The proportion of outstanding teaching is increasing.
- There is a rising trend in pupils' achievement. All groups of pupils make good progress and standards are consistently significantly higher than all pupils nationally.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff are united in their commitment to ensure that the upward trend is maintained.
- Behaviour is good. Older pupils are good role models and look after the younger ones.
- Members of the governing body play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.
- Parents say that their children 'love school' and want to come to school, even when they are ill.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that all pupils consistently achieve exceptionally well.
- Learning opportunities for children in the Reception class inside the classroom and outside are not always as rich, exciting and meaningful as they should be.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons, taught by six teachers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- Seven joint observations of teaching and learning were conducted with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector spoke to parents and took account of 35 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as one letter addressed to the inspector.
- The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks, and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of governing body meetings and planning documents.
- The inspector took account of the 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- North Marston Church of England School is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Most of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding (known as the pupil premium) is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are all below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a morning club for its pupils before school.
- There are five classes. Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are taught in mixed-aged classes.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
  - all teachers challenge the more-able pupils
  - all teachers plan relevant, exciting, meaningful opportunities that will engage pupils' interest so that pupils all learn exceptionally well
  - teachers in Key Stage 1 help pupils to respond independently to marking in order to improve their work
  - outstanding practice is shared more widely.
- Enrich the ways in which Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning are planned to include more exciting, meaningful opportunities for children to learn both inside and outdoors.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because pupils make good, and sometimes exceptional, progress during their time at school. Pupils reach standards which are significantly above all pupils nationally at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This reflects improvements that have been made in teaching and the increasing proportion of outstanding teaching in the school.
- Information from school records and observations in lessons shows that an increased focus on guided reading, following a dip at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012, has ensured all groups of pupils are now making good and some exceptional progress throughout the school.
- Improved teaching, as a result of professional development courses to inspire boys' writing, and using speaking and listening before writing are also reflected in increased rates of progress in writing throughout the school. In an outstanding Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were enthusiastically involved in planning their own creation story. Good opportunities to have short discussions and share ideas inspired a rich use of language and spurred them on to do their very best.
- Boys have been doing better than girls in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. A club for girls is already helping them increase their confidence. One-to-one tuition from a governor who is a mathematics specialist helps those pupils who are in danger of underachieving.
- The level at which Reception children start school varies. However, in 2012, children started school with a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding. They make good progress because they have a thirst for learning, but some activities are not always as rich and stimulating as they could be.
- Until recently the school has had no pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. This year it has a very few pupils. Resources bought for one pupil are helping that pupil reach levels that are significantly higher than all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Learning gaps between these pupils and all pupils nationally are closing quickly. Speech therapy and books to develop speaking and listening help younger children reach the expected levels in early reading and writing skills, and computer programs help boost specific mathematical skills to the expected levels.
- Accurate identification and a good range of extra support, in the form of very skilled teaching assistants, enable disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make the same rate of progress as their peers.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers know their pupils well. Good relationships ensure that pupils enjoy their work and try hard. Most of the work is planned at the right level for each pupil, but there are times when more able pupils are given tasks that are too easy for them.
- In an outstanding Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson on organising and interpreting information, all pupils said the work was a challenge, but, 'We love a challenge!' The teacher's excellent questioning caused the pupils to pause for thought, question what they had done, make the link in learning and self-correct. The pupils were eager to do their best because the teacher's own enthusiasm motivated them and gave them confidence. However, this is not always the case and some lessons do lack exciting, meaningful opportunities to engage pupils' interest.
- Very good subject knowledge, an insistence on accuracy and a rapid rate of learning make the best lessons thought provoking and exciting. For example, Year 1 pupils quickly understood how to use their knowledge of how to double numbers in more complex calculations. A practical demonstration meant that pupils could clearly understand how to double a number and add one more.
- Some of the activities in the Reception class limit children to pencil and paper activities and do not always give them more exciting, meaningful ways to help them learn. One little girl delighted

in learning about numbers in the sand tray outside because of the enthusiasm and good questioning skills of the teaching assistant, but inside children showed less enthusiasm for making cakes out of grey play dough.

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 say that teachers' marking helps them to improve their work. They are given time to make their corrections and address any misunderstanding. Teachers in Key Stage 1 mark pupils' work regularly but do not always ensure that pupils have the time to correct their work and so mistakes are repeated.

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

- Good relationships and a caring family atmosphere, where all adults are good role models, ensure that pupils are well behaved and have a positive attitude to learning.
- Pupils have a clear set of personal values because the school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils and parents agree that, as a result, behaviour is good and the school is a safe place to be. Pupils also know how to keep themselves free from harm and use the internet safely.
- Playtime is harmonious and pupils say they 'look out for each other', with older pupils playing with younger pupils and helping them to resolve any minor disputes. However, pupils say that play can sometimes be boisterous and that a few individual pupils can be 'a bit silly' in some lessons, such as during games or dance, and this annoys the others because they enjoy learning.
- Where teaching is outstanding, behaviour is exemplary, every pupil is focused on the task in hand and keen to do their best. The pupils help each other, share ideas and have a good knowledge and understanding of their learning and how to improve.
- Pupils are emphatic that there is no bullying. They know and can talk about the different types of bullying and are confident there is always someone who will listen to them and take swift, effective action if needed.
- All pupils attend school regularly and parents agree saying that their children 'cannot wait to come to school'. Families where parents have to go to work early appreciate the benefits of the school's morning club.

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

- Teaching and learning are improving strongly as a result of good leadership by the headteacher and good support from the local authority. The way in which checks on the quality of teaching is now shared with teachers. This has created an open forum for discussion which, together with a more focused analysis of the findings, has ensured that teaching is consistently good and the proportion of outstanding teaching is increasing.
- Effective management of performance and focused staff development have also been important contributory factors in the improvements made in teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants are keen to refine their practice and seek out more effective ways to meet the pupils' needs and raise achievement. All staff are involved in self-audit and agree targets that relate to their range of pay and experience.
- All teachers are held to account and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is arranged. This, together with the school's good support for disabled pupils and those pupils with special educational needs, ensures that there is no discrimination and that there is an equality of opportunity. However, the school recognises that more able pupils are not always given sufficient challenge.
- The way in which subjects are planned ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat work and make good progress and that all pupils benefit from good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body play an active part in the strategic direction of the school. Actions resulting from a recent whole school survey taken by the governing body have addressed issues, clarified roles and perceptions and established its role in the work of the school. The governors have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare nationally to those of other similar schools because they ask the right questions and keep a close check on pupil progress. They have detailed knowledge of every pupil known to be eligible for extra funding, the money available and the value added by this funding. They have bought into good-quality local authority training which has ensured that they have enough up-to-date knowledge to ask searching questions and hold the school to account. The governors have a clear understanding of the management of teachers' performance and how it is, and must, be used to improve the quality of teaching. Governors are fully involved with setting targets for the school and hold it to account. They ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110412
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403117

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Chadbund
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Gouldstone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 April 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01296 670286
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