

Netley Marsh Church of England Infant School

Ringwood Road, Woodlands, Southampton, SO40 7GY

Inspection dates 12–13 March 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

- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes of high quality. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Behaviour is outstanding. The atmosphere in the school means there is a strong feeling of care. Pupils are helped to develop a real joy in learning.
- Pupils' achievement is good. All staff are committed to doing their utmost to help all pupils succeed. They quickly identify individual needs so that action can be taken to support pupils' learning. As a result no group of pupils is being left behind as attainment rises.
- The subjects and topics pupils study are outstandingly well chosen. They motivate pupils and contribute very well to their good progress. Pupils are given memorable experiences including a wide variety of exciting visitors and visits.
- Leadership and management benefit from the strength of the federation, whose staff provide a wealth of experience. The executive headteacher is ambitious and knows exactly how well the school is doing and where it should go. The head of learning is taking the right action to improve progress and the quality of teaching.
- Pupils settle in quickly into the Reception class and feel safe and secure throughout the school. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their rising attendance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are not yet outstanding. Teachers are not yet getting maximum opportunities to learn from the outstanding teaching within the school and other schools.
- Too few pupils did well in last year's Year 1 phonics check (about how sounds and letters are linked) because the teaching of phonics was not systematic enough.
- Governors are not focusing closely enough on how the school could improve further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons or parts of lessons, including phonics sessions (where the links between sounds and letters are taught). All were joint observations with either the executive headteacher or the head of learning.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of learning, other staff, five members of the governing body, the local authority and a group of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 26 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents and carers at the end of the school day.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' books, observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information regarding pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation and records relating to attendance. Discussions were held regarding child protection and safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of the 17 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Netley Marsh is a smaller than average sized infant school, serving families from its local village and surrounding communities.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average. Pupil premium is extra money given to schools for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average and the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- There are three classes: one for the Reception Year, one for Year 1 and one for Year 2.
- The school is part of a federation with Copythorne Church of England Infant School and St Michael and All Angels Church of England Infant School. The federation has a single governing body and is led by an executive headteacher. Netley Marsh has its own head of learning who manages the day-to-day running of the school.
- There is a private before- and after-school club, which is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - using the expertise found across the federation to enable staff to learn from each other
 - ensuring that the reorganisation of phonics teaching leads to accelerated progress.
- Ensure governance is more sharply focused on school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are making good and improving progress. Typically pupils reach or exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2, particularly in mathematics. Following a dip last year in English to standards in line with national averages, current Year 2 pupils are on track to reach above average standards in 2013.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Due to effective checks, all groups of pupils make good progress. Last year the school identified a difference in attainment between girls and boys, particularly in boys' writing. Every opportunity was then taken to raise enthusiasm and encourage boys to write, including entrance hall displays depicting male celebrities writing as well as carefully focused small-group teaching. These initiatives resulted in exceptional progress.
- The school is successfully closing the gap between those who are eligible for the pupil premium and those who are not. This year all groups of pupils who are eligible are progressing well, and there is no difference between their performance in reading, writing and mathematics and that of others.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with their peers.
- Pupils enter the school with skills that vary year by year, but generally they are at lower levels than those expected nationally. Last year pupils had particular weaknesses in speaking and listening skills. The school has focused effectively on providing opportunities for pupils to develop these skills, for example in small-group storytelling, where pupils are encouraged to converse with both the teacher and each other.
- Reception children enjoy a rich and rewarding environment. The exciting curriculum really encourages children to explore the world around them. During the theme of The Titanic, pupils planned, drew and built boats that would either float or sink. The large pupil-led construction in the outdoor area provided immense enjoyment and learning about gravity, weights and weather, and involved copious amounts of water, bricks and pipes.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics check were below the national average. The school has recently instigated a new organisational structure to improve achievement in phonics. Pupils are now grouped by their ability regardless of age. Early indications show a positive impact. For example, many children in Reception can correctly sound out and write, 'I wish I had a bed.' However, the scheme will have to be carefully reviewed in a few months to verify that it is providing improved progress.
- Achievement is also enhanced by the school's partnership with parents and carers. Learning journals provide parents and carers with regular feedback on pupils' achievements and challenges. The school provides innovative ways to help parents and carers support their children's learning at home, for example via the termly projects.

The quality of teaching is good

- All teaching observed was good and some was outstanding. Senior leaders regularly check on teachers' performance so teachers know exactly what they need to work on to raise attainment.
- Where pupils make the best progress, teachers use innovative methods and interesting resources to capture and retain pupils' attention. Teachers use questioning effectively to explore pupils' knowledge and understanding. Challenges that pupils carry out without adult help at the end of many lessons are a particularly effective way of consolidating learning. For example in the Year 2 class, pupils were keen to demonstrate their learning to gain either a bronze, silver or gold award.
- The school is keen to make the most of the wealth of experience within the federation, but as yet staff have had limited opportunities to learn from the very best teaching in the other schools. Staff are already benefiting from a structure for planning outstanding lessons, which focuses on

how to maximise progress for every child.

- Teachers record and track pupils' progress carefully; marking is clear and shows pupils how to improve. All staff check on pupils' progress during lessons and if needed change what pupils are doing or help them in such a way that they accelerate progress. Skilled teaching assistants make a positive contribution to learning; they are confident and self-reliant, often taking the initiative in developing ideas with individuals and groups of pupils.
- All teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. This means that learning flows well throughout the day in calm and purposeful lessons. In an interesting Year 1 lesson on money where pupils were learning to give correct change, several pupils wanted to continue into their break time to ensure that they had completed the activity.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium are well supported in their learning. Pupil premium funds are used to support eligible pupils, for example through one-to-one teaching or work in small groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour both in class and around the school is typically outstanding. A strong ethos of friendship and support is well developed both in assemblies and throughout the school. The close location of the church enables pupils to be fully involved in all the main festivals of the year. This supports pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The values the school promotes permeate every aspect of school life from the way children hold doors open for visitors to the polite way that they talk to each other.
- Staff know all pupils very well in this small school, and quickly get to know their individual strengths. From Reception to Year 2 pupils' behaviour for learning is exemplary and this enables teachers to be creative in their teaching and use of resources. An example of this was the careful way that pupils created a dream catcher when they were visited by an artist during the inspection. Activities like this also support pupils' cultural development.
- All parents and carers who answered the Parent View questionnaire would recommend the school to others. Those spoken to at the school gate were very enthusiastic about the school and were complimentary about how well the school looks after their children and helps them learn.
- Pupils have an excellent start to their school life. Before entering the school in Reception, children have the opportunity to visit the school regularly. This helps them to quickly become familiar with school routines and ensures that they are confident and ready to start learning as soon as they arrive.
- The school ensures that pupils learn responsibility for their immediate environment with the Forest Schools project in Year 2, which is an event run across the federation. Pupils learn stewardship of the countryside and learn how to work both collaboratively and on their own to gain a greater understanding of the world around them.
- Attendance has recently improved and is now above average; initiatives such as the class attendance bear have had very positive results.
- Pupils are emphatic in their view that there is no bullying, but are aware of what to do should it occur. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The leadership and management are good

- The school benefits from being part of a federation. There is a wealth of experience to draw upon which staff utilise; however, they appreciate that this is still to reach its full potential. The executive headteacher and head of learning provide a clear vision for the school, and they in turn are supported by the other experienced heads of learning in the other two federated schools. This strong, experienced team ensures that the plans the executive headteacher has for the way the school should develop can be implemented quickly and effectively.

- The executive headteacher closely manages teachers' performance and there are clear links between decisions on teachers' salaries and the progress of the pupils they teach. Teachers and senior leaders constantly review progress. They quickly identify any child who may be falling behind and take action to support their achievement. This ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils.
- The curriculum is outstanding. It has been carefully planned to ensure that children develop skills, knowledge and personal qualities that enable them to be confident learners and responsible citizens. For example, an exciting Year 1 project on the Great Fire of London had children playing detective and interviewing members of the local dramatic society who were acting out the roles of the key characters of the event.
- The local authority provides light touch support and knows the school well.
- The school demonstrates a good capacity to improve.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The federation governing body has full information about the standards the school achieves and how the school compares against other schools nationally. However, governors are not focusing closely enough on the quality of teaching and how the school could improve further. Governors are well trained and come from a variety of backgrounds, including from business and education. They have a good knowledge of performance management systems and how well pay is aligned with performance. Governors know how the pupil premium is used and have assessed the difference the money is making to results.

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	116302
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	401587

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harvey Baker
Headteacher	Tina Daniel
Date of previous school inspection	February 2010
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