

Noremarsch Community Junior School

Clarendon Drive, Wootton Bassett, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 8BT

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has been uncompromising in his drive to improve teaching, and raise achievement. In this, he has been successful.
- The monitoring actions of the headteacher hold the teachers robustly to account for the progress of pupils. This is sustaining the improvements in pupils' learning.
- Teaching is good in English and mathematics and so pupils make good progress. Higher achieving pupils do well because work set for them is challenging.
- Parents are right to think that their children behave well in school. Behaviour is good. Parents say their children enjoy lessons and feel safe.
- The governing body focuses sharply on holding the school to account for sustaining improvements in teaching and learning. Governors make a strong contribution to ensuring the school continues to aspire to be 'even better'.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work in English and mathematics is not consistent in all classes. Some comments by teachers do not give pupils guidance or advice about how to improve their work and its presentation.
- Teachers do not always use questions in lessons which probe pupils' understanding. They sometimes accept simple answers and so miss the chance to extend pupils' learning further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed eight lessons, four of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, teachers and representatives from the governing body. Inspectors spoke with a small group of pupils about their work. A meeting was held with a group of parents and some parents were spoken to informally at the end of the school day. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority and held a telephone conversation with an external consultant who supports the school.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked closely at their work in lessons.
- Inspectors carried out a joint work scrutiny with the English and mathematics subject leaders. They looked in detail at the content and quality of pupils' written work, and the effectiveness of marking to promote pupils' learning.
- Inspectors looked at plans for improvement, information on pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the headteacher's monitoring information, school records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- By the end of the inspection there had been 18 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire, Parent View, and 22 staff questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Jane Neech, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Simon Rowe

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This additional government funding is given to schools to help certain groups, including pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. These pupils' needs relate mainly to moderate learning and behaviour difficulties.
- Pupils in Year 3, 4 and 5 are taught in mixed-aged classes. There are two Year 6 classes.
- In 2012 the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In January 2012 the school was deemed to require a notice to improve. Since that time one of Her Majesty's Inspectors carried out a monitoring visit in September 2012 to assess the school's progress on the areas of improvement from the previous inspection and judged it to be making good progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers' marking, particularly in English and mathematics, consistently and routinely gives pupils advice about how to improve their work, as well as guidance about presentation, including handwriting.
- Further develop work on how well teachers use probing questions in lessons so that pupils are:
 - challenged to explain their work more precisely, for example solving problems in mathematics
 - challenged more sharply to think about misconceptions
 - helped to deepen their understanding of what is being taught.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The attainment of pupils is above average. In the 2012 National Curriculum tests, boys and girls reached standards well above national expectations in English. Higher ability pupils performed exceptionally well in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics are rising because of stronger teaching of the subject. The most recent school checks on pupils' progress show that the attainment of pupils in mathematics is now above average.
- On entry to school at Year 3 most, but not all pupils, have average or better levels of skills in English and mathematics. Most pupils in each year group are now making good progress. In mathematics lessons, higher ability pupils tackle work which is well above national expectations and produce high quality work.
- The school's own information indicates that pupils are firmly on track to sustain their end-of year targets in English and meet equally challenging targets in mathematics. Achievement is not yet outstanding. This is because, until recently, pupils' progress in mathematics has not been as rapid and sustained as progress in English.
- Pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding make similar progress to other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The funding provides extra resources, such as additional teaching and mentoring support. The average point scores at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved for those pupils at risk of falling behind. The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also rising. This demonstrates how well the school is closing the gap between these groups and pupils nationally.
- The additional support given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is closely monitored and tailored to their abilities. As a result, the progress of these pupils is accelerating from their different starting points.
- Parents consider their children are well prepared for secondary education. Pupils also think they are developing the literacy and numeracy skills they will need as they grow up. Pupils are articulate and confidently put forward their views. However, teachers do not always make the most of pupils' abilities by challenging pupils to respond to searching questions in literacy and numeracy lessons.
- Pupils enjoy reading, read regularly at home and at school. The reading diaries are well used to provide a dialogue between home and school about pupils' progress in reading. Some parents would like more communication from school as well as more information about pupils' homework. The school acknowledges there is more work to be done in this area.

The quality of teaching is good

- A key strength in the typically good teaching is the detailed way in which teachers plan activities in English and mathematics based on National Curriculum levels. In a mathematics lesson on bar graphs, for example, work set was well matched to the different abilities in the mixed-aged Year 4 and Year 5 class, with extension activities to challenge higher ability pupils. Consequently, all pupils showed a good understanding of interpreting graphs.
- The resources for literacy and numeracy in classrooms support pupils' learning, such as personalised prompt cards for different methods of calculation. Pupils use these helpful prompts to check their work and so are developing a sense of independence.
- The best teachers' marking gives pupils guidance about how to improve their work. In the effective lessons observed during the inspection, teachers made time for pupils to read and respond to marking advice. However, over time, some teachers' marking in pupils' English and mathematics books fails to give pupils advice as to how to improve their work, including presentation and handwriting. Marking comments would be even better if the teachers focused less on what pupils can do and more on what pupils need to do next to take their understanding forward.

- There is a climate of sharing learning and fostering good relationships in lessons. Pupils generally work well in pairs. This partner work would be even better if teachers asked more searching questions to extend pupils' thinking.
- Learning intentions for lessons are shared in different ways in pupil friendly language. During lessons, teachers use questions to check how well pupils, including those who need extra help, are doing. However, not all questions are sufficiently challenging and so teachers miss opportunities for pupils to explain their work or deepen their learning.
- Pupils who are at risk of not doing so well receive good support. Extra help in small group work is better tailored than previously to match pupils' needs. Teaching assistants and teachers provide a range of support. This ensures that those who find learning more difficult or whose needs are complex, and those who are more able in a particular subject, enjoy their learning and achieve well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Inspectors endorse the view of parents and staff that behaviour in school is typically good. For example, in a mixed-aged Year 3 and Year 4 topic lesson, pupils' attention to the class teacher was impressive as the pupils talked about the spiritual and social impact of different inspirational world leaders.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including internet, extreme behaviour (racism) and homophobic bullying. They say everyone gets on well in classes and in the playground. Over the course of time, lessons are rarely interrupted by pupils not behaving well. However, behaviour would be even better if teachers, during lessons, posed sharper questions to individual pupils to keep them tightly focused on working hard and doing their best.
- Pupils' moral and emotional development is promoted well through all that the school does. There are often links in lessons with subjects that enhance pupils' social and emotional development, such as writing a biography in an English lesson. Pupils were challenged to consider characteristics and feeling as well as facts. Pupils are polite and respectful and the whole-school system for behaviour is followed conscientiously.
- Attendance is above average; pupils arrive at school on time. There have been no exclusions over the past few years. Any isolated incidents of pupils misbehaving are dealt with quickly following the school's policy and procedures and involving parents as appropriate.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is leading Noremarsh Junior School with determination to ensure all pupils receive a good education. The focus on improving teaching and learning is bringing about the considerable changes to pupils' outcomes. All areas identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. A culture of rapid and sustainable improvement has continued since the HMI monitoring visit in September 2012. This is achieved by the robust monitoring, accurate self-evaluation and action planning which ensures no pupil is discriminated against.
- Targets for teachers link the effect of teaching to the pupils' achievement and raise expectations. The 'purple staircase' assessment system is a useful tool used by school leaders to check on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. The headteacher uses lesson observations as a developmental tool for teachers. This has proved to be successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning to good.
- The local authority has delivered effective training which has supported the headteacher's work in improving school performance.
- Leaders make sure everyone has an equal chance to do well. They plan spending of additional funds, provided through extra government money, to match the needs of pupils eligible for support. The money is spent on extra sessions in literacy and numeracy for pupils in danger of

not achieving their potential and extra teaching assistant support.

- The headteacher makes sure that all teachers have roles and responsibilities linked to the salaries they receive. This creates a strong team of 'experts' in different areas who are keen to develop further and aspire to be even more effective. The leadership and management of the school are not outstanding because English and mathematics leaders have yet to develop their roles fully, such as reporting to governors about progress in their subjects.
 - The range of what the school offers, through different topics and clubs, widens pupils' experiences. All pupils have at least two hours of physical activity per week. Pupils undertook their own survey of PE lessons. As a result, teachers have changed some of the activities so that lessons are more active. There are visits to cultural places of interest and school displays of pupils' work demonstrate the importance the school places on pupils' appreciation of a range of curriculum subjects, including art.
 - The curriculum provides learning opportunities for all groups of pupils. Topics covered include positive behaviour and how to keep safe in school. Carefully tailored support for pupils' individual needs means that the school is promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination effectively.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body supports and challenges the school with a focus on ensuring that every pupil has an equal chance to succeed. Governors demonstrate a strong capacity to bring about school improvement. Governors write and review action plans with school leaders. For example, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs regularly reviews the impact of the school's work with the special educational needs coordinator. Together, they put forward actions to address next steps. The links between literacy and numeracy governors and subject leaders are in early stages.
 - Governors are well up to speed on how to interpret assessment data presented by the school to measure academic performance and to see how it compares with the performance in similar schools. They use this information to check how quickly teaching is improving and is maintaining pupils' good progress. The governing body has a good understanding of the performance management of teachers. The governors ensure that teachers' salaries match to their responsibilities. Governors set ambitious targets for the headteacher and rigorously check how well these are being met. They hold the headteacher to account for efficient financial management, including decisions on spending additional government funding, and that all relevant policies, including safeguarding, are up to date and meet requirements.
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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	126250
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	399721

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Sheppard
Headteacher	Andy Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	January 2012
Telephone number	01793 852250
Fax number	01793 849729
Email address	head@noremarsch.wilts.sch.uk

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