

# Norton Fitzwarren Church of England Primary School

Blackdown View, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 6TB

## Inspection dates

12–13 February 2014

<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.

- Norton Fitzwarren is a welcoming school that has made good improvement since the previous inspection. The increasing number of pupils attending the school reflects leaders' success in regaining the confidence of the local community.
- Pupils achieve well during their time at this school. They develop particularly good speaking and listening skills, which help them to make good progress from their starting points. Progress is even better especially in English, in Years 5 and 6, because of outstanding teaching.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers often base topics on favourite stories and books to stimulate interest and joy in learning across the school.
- Children make a good start when they enter the school because of effective partnerships between staff in the new Early Years Foundation Stage unit and parents.
- Pupils behave well, have lots of friends and help each other to learn. Pupils say they feel safe and their attitudes to learning are often outstanding, especially during assemblies and when sharing ideas in pairs.
- The headteacher leads effectively and is well supported by staff and the governing body. By sharing expertise with colleagues in their partner school, leaders are helping staff to quicken the pace of improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- As pupils move through the school, their basic number facts are not always developed consistently well.
- Sometimes, in lessons, teachers do not emphasise the particular reading and writing skills that some pupils need to improve or make clear to them how they can do this.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher during these observations.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also attended a celebration assembly and the breakfast club.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes. The inspector also met with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector took account of 21 staff questionnaires and 17 parent responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also spoke with several parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; development and lesson plans and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and the number of pupils attending the school has increased substantially since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the normal times is significantly above average, especially in Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average. These proportions vary significantly from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below that found nationally, but varies substantially across year groups within the school.
- Since September 2013, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught together in Reception and pre-school classes, which form the new Early Years Foundation Stage unit. The pre-school, which currently caters for 17 children, is now managed by the governing body as part of the school and is therefore subject to this inspection.
- Pupils are taught in small, mixed age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school works in formal collaboration with another school. The headteacher leads both schools, although each school has its own governing body.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and the rates of progress for pupils from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
  - teachers focus more sharply on extending the particular reading and writing skills that pupils need to improve
  - pupils are told how to improve their reading and writing skills more often
  - teachers embed pupils' knowledge of basic number facts more consistently and effectively as the pupils move through the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good and has improved since the previous inspection because the school has introduced successful initiatives to improve the quality of teaching. For example, close teamwork between pre-school and Reception staff ensures that children's individual needs are known and supported well.
- This means that, from their varying and generally below typical levels of skills on entry into Reception, children now make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They continue to make good progress as they move up the school.
- School checks on pupils' developing skills and inspection observations of pupils' work in lessons and in books support this view of good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils arriving later than the normal time of entry from other schools are well supported and make good progress. However, the limited time spent in this school by an increasing number of pupils makes national comparisons of achievement data less meaningful. For example, approximately a third of the pupils currently in Year 6 have joined this school year.
- Skilful questioning by staff ensures that all pupils make particularly good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average, but basic numeracy skills, and occasionally other skills, such as using an appropriate pencil grip and tackling new words, are more variable through the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have their needs met in lessons. They are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants and make similarly good progress to other pupils.
- The majority of pupils in receipt of pupil premium support, including several arriving from other schools, attain as well as other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because early checks on these pupils' skills enable staff to build on previous learning and quicken their progress. However, some pupils supported through the pupil premium, who enter at a later stage in their schooling, lag behind their peers by about three terms in English and two terms in mathematics because they have not experienced the same foundation in learning.
- Over time, standards in mathematics have not been as good as writing. This was because not all of the most-able pupils capable of reaching the higher levels did so. This academic year, in response to raised expectations, all pupils are making good and increasingly better progress in reading and mathematics, with an increased number of the most-able pupils now on track to achieve higher levels of attainment in these aspects.
- Pupils' above average scores in the Year 1 screening check on phonics (letters and sounds) and their confidence in reading to access learning in lessons also reflect improved teaching of phonics and reading since the previous inspection. Increased parental support of reading at home and the use of favourite stories, such as *Where the Wild Things Are*, further promote pupils' enjoyment and success in reading.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Warm encouraging relationships and fun in learning are common features in all classes. For example, during a phonics session in Years 1 and 2, the teacher's skilful use of a 'Fred Frog' toy in helping pupils to joyfully 'super-sound' letter sounds promoted accurate learning.
- All adults working in the school are diligent in getting to know the pupils and provide timely and effective support to lift pupils' confidence and to keep pupils learning well.
- Teachers manage behaviour well and set a consistently good example in valuing pupils' efforts. Pupils appreciate these qualities and confidently pose questions and eagerly explain their ideas.
- For example, during a literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6, where teaching was strong, the teacher carefully developed the pupils' thinking about what makes a good piece of writing in a step-by-step way to build on their previous understanding. All pupils, especially the most able,

confidently outlined how the interesting and technical vocabulary, which they named 'Magpie Words', can be used to make writing engaging for the reader. Similarly, during a mathematics lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher's challenges using 'spicy problems' enthused pupils and promoted effective learning. At times, basic numeracy skills, especially for those who find mathematics hard, are not developed as effectively.

- Teachers use displays well to celebrate and enrich pupils' learning. Displays of pupils' work also reflect the good breadth of activities across subjects undertaken by pupils. Topics, such as 'The Wild Rumpus' in Years 1 and 2, extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and stimulate their interest. At times, competitions such as the 'Premiership Football Handwriting Challenge' and 'Tables Olympics' are also effective in focusing pupils' concentration and improving their skills.
- All staff develop lively discussions in lessons. They encourage pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to share ideas with each other. Staff also give good quality verbal guidance, which helps pupils to improve their work. For example, in the pre-school and Reception classes, adults join the children in the outdoor 'building site' and in 'The Three Bears' House' to develop their ideas and extend communication and language skills.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have continued to improve the way they check pupils' work. Teachers' marking of pupils' work covered in lessons extends understanding well. However, teachers do not always sufficiently emphasise how pupils can improve particular reading or writing skills and this slows progress.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils on the school council all agreed that behaviour has improved across the school and is now good. Pupils like their teachers and appreciate the way all adults value their efforts and help them to improve. As a result, pupils show good attitudes to learning and are proud of their work, especially their better progress in writing this year.
- Pupils enjoy school and love expressing ideas and opinions in response to adult questions and challenges. But, occasionally a few pupils lack confidence and rely too much on adults before fully engaging in their work.
- Most parents questioned agree that behaviour is good and inspection observations of lessons and pupils at play showed that pupils of all ages mix well together and enjoy happy lunch and break times. For example, pupils help each other and readily support those sitting on the 'Friendship Bench' to look for company. The school's behaviour logs also show how pupils are responding well to guidance and have improved their behaviour.
- While most pupils behave extremely well, a few pupils need adult support, for example to share large wheeled toys more willingly during break times.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Parents who responded to the questionnaire are assured that children are kept safe. Pupils also say they feel very safe and welcome the caring support of staff. As one pupil said, typically expressing the views of others, 'We've got lovely children and lovely teachers and so we get on really well.'
- Pupils understand the various types of bullying, including physical and verbal abuse. Pupils said that whilst bullying might happen, it is very rare, and that, 'Teachers would sort it out very quickly.' School records support this view.
- Attendance has improved and now exceeds that found nationally, reflecting strengthened links with parents and pupils' increased enjoyment of school.

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

- The headteacher's encouraging approach and open commitment to team leadership promote a

high level of staff morale. Her empowerment of senior staff across both partner schools promotes the full sharing of expertise and underpins the effective leadership and management in the school.

- Governors have strengthened the way they make checks on the school since the previous inspection. Their increased liaison with governors in the partner school also makes good use of the widened range of skills available.
  - As a result, leaders and managers know the school well, identify the right priorities for improvement and have brought about good improvement since the previous inspection. This school year, for example, the decision to take over the pre-school and combine it with the Reception class to create a designated Early Years Foundation Stage unit is already extending children's learning opportunities and enriching their progress.
  - The headteacher, aided by other senior staff and checks by the governing body, oversees the professional development of staff, and their progression along pay scales effectively, in order to improve teaching. This includes, for example, the continuing work of the literacy and numeracy leaders in using expertise from the partner school to further extend the best teaching practice across both schools.
  - Pupils' good achievement reflects the success of concerted efforts to accelerate the pace of learning and shows a secure capacity to bring further improvement.
  - The governing body and senior staff fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Safeguarding checks are thorough and policies, including safe recruitment procedures, keep pupils safe. All staff show an effective commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. They welcome new pupils and do not tolerate discrimination.
  - Additional funds, such as the pupil premium and funds to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are used effectively to ensure that these pupils make similar progress to other pupils during their time in the school.
  - New funding for sport and physical education is also used well to strengthen teaching; for example, teachers and teaching assistants now work alongside skilled specialist coaches. Pupils are extending their skills and improving their health and well-being through increased opportunities to participate in after-school and inter-schools sports.
  - Supportive links with the church and stimulating topic work further promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the weekly celebration assembly strongly encourages pupils to give of their best and to appreciate each other's achievements. Class topics based on books such as *Where the Wild Things Are* and *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* in the Early Years Foundation Stage, also cultivate children's imagination and thoughtful writing.
  - The local authority provides light touch support for this good and improving school; for example, by encouraging partner working between schools and by providing governor training.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Since the previous inspection, the governing body has offered more rigorous challenge to ensure that standards have risen. For example, the governors know how to check pupils' progress through sharp questioning of senior staff, analysing data and observations made through first-hand visits to the school. As a result, they are clear about the impact of the new sports funding and of the use of the pupil premium in improving provision and raising pupils' skills. Governors visit the school regularly. Through their various committees, including a joint Education Committee (comprised of core governors from both partner schools), they check the work of the school and know how teaching impacts on pupils' learning.
    - Governors support the headteacher in checking the performance of all staff and have a clear understanding of how teachers' performance is linked to pay progression. In particular, they support the headteacher in compiling well thought out plans for school improvement and in working supportively with parents. Governors are also diligent in seeking their own improvement through regular training, for example in how to secure pupils' health and safety.
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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 <i>improvement</i> 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>	123798
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	431097

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barbara Nadin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kirsti Nelson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823276611
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