

**\*\*\* CASE STUDY \*\*\***

**Classroom Monitor helps to take Northway Infant School in Gloucestershire from 'good' to 'outstanding' Ofsted**



*Northway Infant School, Gloucestershire*

***The 'outstanding' school:***

*Following a 2009 Ofsted inspection where Northway Infant School in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, was recognised as a 'good' school, teachers at the school have been using interactive markbook technology from Classroom Monitor to record the attainment information of its pupils. The school has since been awarded an 'outstanding' Ofsted – a fantastic achievement only attained by six percent of primary schools in the country - with elements of their success being directly attributed to Classroom Monitor. Lynn Williams, Headteacher and SENCO at Northway Infants for 11 years, discusses how Classroom Monitor is used on a day to day basis at the school and how it has contributed to the recent Ofsted success.*

Northway Infant School is a mixed infant school for boys and girls between the ages of four and seven. The school has 120 pupils and is linked with Northway Pre School which has 70 pupils between the ages of two and four. The school is one of the first 500 schools in the country to gain the National ICT Mark in the use of Technology to support learning.

**The move from 'good' to 'outstanding'**

Following the Ofsted inspection in 2009, staff at Northway Infants school were advised to:

- Raise the standards attained by boys, particularly in writing, to match the high performance of girls.
- Ensure that teaching and the guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work always focuses on the most important next steps in learning.

Lynn enthuses about how the software has helped them to achieve these targets: “Staff throughout the school now use the online markbooks on a day to day basis to record information regarding pupils’ progress. It is used to help us track and analyse the progress of the pupils and to monitor their attainment. As all of the assessment information is stored in one place, we can use Classroom Monitor to analyse the progress of different groups of children, such as those with Special Educational Needs or separating boys and girls, if required.

“We use the online markbooks as a starting point to develop progress and attainment methods and to monitor the progress of these specific groups of pupils. Teachers can then use the information documenting these pupils’ progression in their lesson planning and can see, at a glance, how each individual in this group is progressing.”

This has clearly proven to be an extremely beneficial tool in helping specific groups of pupils to progress and was recognised in the 2011 Ofsted report, which stated that: ‘The use of assessment to group pupils according to their needs and providing them with constant feedback about how well they are doing is highly effective.’

### **Empowering young people**

Classroom Monitor can also help teachers improve their Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) practice in the classroom. The school’s recent Ofsted report stated that ‘Assessment has become more detailed and organised so staff share more precise information about how to promote each child’s development. Teaching and learning are good because good use is made of this assessment and there is a skilful emphasis upon promoting children’s key skills.’

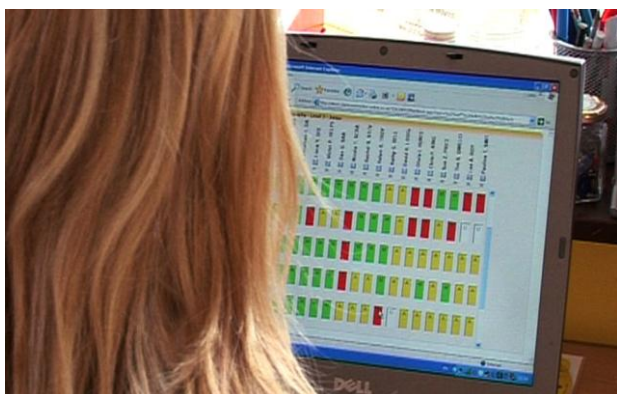
Lynn explains how the design of the online markbooks has supported the school in organising assessments: “Classroom Monitor enables us to have a much sharper focus on

how each child is progressing and it also enables us to access this information much more frequently, meaning that we are continuously aware of their progress.”

This was also recognised by Ofsted and is accredited to helping the school to achieve its outstanding classification: ‘Since the previous inspection, the school has developed far more rigorous assessment procedures so staff are tracking the progress of each pupil, in all subjects, more closely and sharing ‘next steps’ with pupils far more routinely. As a consequence, pupils are remarkably well informed about their achievements and what they are aiming for. This empowers these young pupils and is a key factor in their enjoyment and achievement.’

### **Adjusting the curriculum**

Recording assessment data can be time-consuming and inefficient in itself, often throwing



up inconsistencies across subjects and individuals which make it difficult to extract any real value from the data that is recorded. Using Classroom Monitor, schools benefit from a fast and accurate method of undertaking broader analyses of year groups, classes and cohorts. This enables schools to identify areas for

improvement and monitor individual progress more efficiently.

As a result of these features, Classroom Monitor has also proven to be particularly helpful to curriculum leaders responsible for managing a specific area of the syllabus. Designed to work like a paper marksheet, Classroom Monitor lists objectives from the National Curriculum, numeracy and literacy strategies, Primary Frameworks or Foundation Stage Profile, against pupils in a class or set, providing information in key areas at glance.

Lynn comments: “By having all of the information documented in the same way alongside objectives from the National Curriculum, curriculum leaders can easily see which areas of teaching are proving to be most successful. The reports present an overview of many aspects of a child’s learning and enable the curriculum leaders to adjust the curriculum if necessary, something that was recognised as being particularly successful by Ofsted.”

Supporting Lynn's comments, the 2011 Ofsted report states that: 'The information generated by this assessment process is also used to analyse any patterns of relative weakness in pupils' learning and the curriculum is rapidly adjusted to address such issues. For example, while focusing on improving pupils' writing, staff recognised that the greatest area of need was in sentence construction. They immediately planned more opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas on paper. The impact of this is apparent in work this term when boys and girls in Year 2 exceeded expectations for their age by writing text to persuade their reader to take a donkey ride.'

Recognising how the curriculum affects pupils' learning at Northway, Ofsted said that the 'outstanding teaching and an exceptionally well-organised curriculum enable boys and girls of all ability groups and backgrounds to make exceptionally rapid progress in their learning.'

### **The outcomes and the future:**

Delighted to be recognised as an 'outstanding' school by Ofsted, Classroom Monitor has now been introduced at Northway Pre School to benefit younger learners and assist nursery staff in their activity planning.

Lynn explains: "Staff at Northway Infant School have continued to benefit from Classroom Monitor and use it daily to assist in lesson planning and assessing pupil progress. It is very simple to use, makes life much easier and the fact that it was recognised by Ofsted as an integral part of our assessment strategy shows what an impact it has had. We decided to introduce it at the Pre School in order for the staff to recognise and monitor young children's educational development and identify areas to target in their practise."

She continues: "So far this has proven to be extremely effective and the staff have managed to integrate the online markbooks very easily. On the rare occasions that we have needed support, Classroom Monitor has dealt with them quickly and efficiently – it is an extremely reliable tool."

Concluding, Lynn comments: "To be classified as an outstanding school by Ofsted is a great achievement for Northway Infant School. We are dedicated to being the best we can be to offer our pupils the best possible learning experience and it is fantastic to be recognised for this."

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**To download a high resolution image to accompany this release, please click here: URL TBC.**

**About Classroom Monitor (Prime Principle Ltd)**

Based in Nottingham and founded in 2002, Prime Principle Ltd offers 'Classroom Monitor', an online interactive markbook. Initially designed for use in primary schools, the tool is an easy method used by teachers to assess and report on each student's continual development. Used in over 1,500 schools, the software application allows teachers to quickly and easily record how pupils are doing in line with the National Curriculum and Government criteria. At a glance, teachers, senior staff and governors can gauge how well pupils are performing and for Ofsted purposes, the school can be easily evaluated to ascertain areas of excellence and where additional attention is necessary. For more information, visit [www.classroommonitor.co.uk](http://www.classroommonitor.co.uk).