

# Marshside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104866
<b>Local authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	377139
<b>Inspection dates</b>	31 January – 1 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Frank Carruthers

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Trail
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katharine Hall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Elswick Road Marshside Southport PR9 9XA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01704 211177
<b>Fax number</b>	01704 232699
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	31 January 2012–1 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	377139



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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Frank Carruthers  
Robert Pye

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers. Pupils' work was inspected and observations were made of pupils' behaviour at play and lunchtimes. The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector consulted the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection but no responses were recorded. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school development plan, records of monitoring teaching and learning, attendance and behavioural records, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors analysed 70 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those returned by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, is average. There are no disabled pupils in the school. In 2011, the school met the government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the age of 11. The school runs daily breakfast and after-school clubs. The school has Dyslexia Friendly status, the Eco-school award and is a Bike It school. Since the previous inspection there have been three changes at headship and one at deputy headship level. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2011.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1 and the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and have skills above those expected for their age by the end of the year. However, this good rate of progress is not maintained in Key Stage 1, where progress is inadequate and standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, achievement was inadequate in 2011 and attainment in Year 6 had declined from high in 2008 to below average. In mathematics, attainment was well below average. Too few pupils reached Level 5 in either English or mathematics. Because of steps taken by the new headteacher and senior leadership team, this decline has begun to be reversed. Attainment in the current Year 6 is average and pupils' progress is satisfactory. However, there are still too few pupils on course to reach the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Teaching during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and the majority of lessons seen were good. However, good teaching has not always been the case in recent years and is not yet fully established in every lesson. Current teaching is making up for gaps in pupils' learning and previous underachievement. As a result, their learning is improving.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils report that they feel safe. Pupils are polite and helpful to one another. A very few display challenging behaviour and are dealt with effectively by the staff who make good use of specialist support when appropriate.
- The senior leadership team under the guidance of the new headteacher has made a significant impact on the quality of provision. It has begun to reverse the decline in

standards in a short period of time. The school has demonstrated clear capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise achievement to at least satisfactory or better and lift standards in English and mathematics to be above average by:
  - establishing high expectations for the achievement of all groups of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, and in particular, planning work for the more-able
  - in Key Stage 1, pitching the teaching of letters and sounds at an appropriate level of challenge for pupils' different levels of attainment
  - developing handwriting skills and providing more opportunities to use them across the curriculum in both key stages
  - in Key Stage 2, developing pupils' writing so that it provides more interest for the reader, for instance in the quality of the vocabulary used
  - in mathematics, extending the opportunities for pupils in both key stages to apply their mathematical skills
  - developing marking and target-setting across both key stages so that pupils have a better understanding of how they are doing and what they need to do next.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Children start in the Reception class with skills that are broadly as expected for their age. They make good progress during the year as a result of the good quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They become independent learners who are curious and have a love of learning. They get on well with one another and with adults. They joined in particularly well dancing in their dragon costume and playing musical instruments to celebrate Chinese New Year. By the time they move on to Year 1 most children's skills are in excess of those expected for their age.

This good progress has not been maintained in Key Stage 1 in recent years and attainment by the end of Year 2 has declined to below average. To arrest this decline, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and Key Stage 1 team have made significant improvements to ease the children's transition into Year 1. The teaching now matches the experiences the children have enjoyed in the Reception class. The quality of the pupils' learning in the current Year 1 reflects this improvement and means they are now making better progress.

The attainment and progress of the current Year 2, however, are much more limited and the pupils' overall achievement is unsatisfactory. This is evident in their reading, writing and mathematical work. For example in mathematics, too many pupils reverse numbers and struggle to think of a way they can add a single digit number to a number above 20.

Attainment in reading is below average at the end of Key Stage 1. It improves in Key Stage 2 so it is average by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' learning is improving. It is now satisfactory overall and in some lessons it is good. For example, pupils in Year 4 showed real enthusiasm for their study of India and Hinduism. They recalled earlier learning well, responded to teachers' questioning readily and enjoyed finding out information from resource books, the internet and video footage. Pupils in Year 3 took a full part in the Victorian classroom the teacher created. They showed empathy with children of that period who worked long hours in difficult conditions. The topic captured their imagination. In several other lessons, pupils demonstrated good attitudes to their learning, worked effectively with partners and shared ideas well.

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and work well with their support assistants. Last year, the attainment of those in Year 6 was in line with the performance of similar pupils nationally. The gap between the performance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils was wider in English than in mathematics last year but is narrower this year.

Attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average, though the proportion of pupils predicted to reach the higher Level 5 in assessment tests is below average. For example, pupils' writing lacks a rich range of vocabulary to enliven their pieces and interest the reader. Most parents and carers have positive views of how their children are progressing, though a few considered progress has not been good enough. Inspection evidence indicates that whereas pupils' progress has been inconsistent in the past, it is showing clear improvement in the current school year. However, there is not yet sufficient good teaching to make up for the gaps in their prior learning.

## **Quality of teaching**

Teachers are now benefiting from a clearer understanding of what characterises a high quality learning experience for pupils. This has been the result of good in-school training for staff and rigorous feedback to teachers on lesson observations initiated by the new headteacher. As a result, lesson-planning is improving and better focused. Resources such as new technology are used to good effect. Teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve have been raised. Tracking of pupils' progress has been redeveloped and staff have targeted support for underachievers more effectively. Nevertheless, there are still several aspects of teaching that need to improve before its quality is consistently good. The more-able are not being challenged enough. This is because some teachers do not make effective use of assessments of their attainment to plan work for them. This was evident in lessons in Key Stage 1 in which pupils are taught about letters and sounds. While the pupils of average and lower ability were catered for well, those with a good awareness of letters and sounds were not being stretched. This was also evident in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on probability when more-able pupils learned nothing new. Pupils' handwriting is beginning to show improvement because of the recent whole-school focus on how it is taught. Nevertheless, expectations are not high enough to ensure pupils use their best style at times other than in handwriting lessons. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to plan how to solve problems. The marking of pupils' work and target-setting do not provide pupils with the essential information about what they need to do to improve and the next steps in their learning. Older pupils have little knowledge about the features of a particular level in some National Curriculum subjects.

Teachers implement the curriculum satisfactorily overall. Elements of English, for instance handwriting, and of mathematics, for example problem solving, are weaker aspects. Strengths of the curriculum lie in the thematic topic approach taken and good links between subjects. The local environment, which includes a bird reserve, is used especially well. The school has its own observation hide and weather station, which pupils in Year 4 talked knowledgeably about. These elements make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 5 reflected in a very mature way on the morality of the natural world, in which some animals prey on others. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed researching the modern city of London and then finding out about the Great Fire of London, thereby raising their awareness of differences between the present and the past. Parents and carers express a very high level of satisfaction with the quality of teaching their children receive. Inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory and clearly improving.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils report that behaviour is good. This was borne out by inspection observations, past records and the views of parents and carers. A few pupils display challenging behaviour and the school has good procedures to manage this. There have been very few exclusions in the last three years. The school successfully promotes good behaviour by its welcoming, orderly ethos. The staff have developed effective partnerships with specialist support services to help pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils report that bullying in any form is rare. A few parents and carers expressed concern about how the school handles bullying. Inspectors explored the behaviour logs and spoke to senior staff about procedures and found that appropriate policies and practice operate effectively. The school takes all appropriate measures to keep the pupils safe and the site secure. As a result, pupils have a very clear understanding about personal safety. Pupils also have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by the opportunities they have to plan fund-raising for various charities. Older pupils, for instance, run a shop selling a variety of items useful in school as well as healthy snacks and drinks.

Pupils have the opportunity for an early start at the school's breakfast club, where they can enjoy a varied healthy menu and a relaxing time playing games with friends. In addition, the school runs a popular after-school club. The curriculum includes visits out of school, Spanish and, for pupils in Year 6, the chance to play a musical instrument. All this adds to pupils' enjoyment of school. Levels of attendance are in line with the national average and punctuality to school is good.

### **Leadership and management**

Since appointment, the headteacher has reviewed all aspects of provision and performance. She streamlined the senior leadership team and quickly set about raising the awareness of staff to the weaknesses identified in the data. Promoting a team approach, senior leaders have placed great emphasis on improving the quality of pupils' learning by providing in-service training, calling on local authority consultants and advisers and carrying out lesson observations. This concerted effort has led to the improved outcomes evident in this inspection. Changes at senior leadership level since the previous inspection hampered progress over time so that the school is not in as strong a position as it was then. However, improved provision and rising standards indicate that the current leadership and

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management are satisfactory. The school's leadership has the capacity to continue this improvement.

The governing body has a satisfactory understanding of where improvements are being made and how it can contribute strategically. Senior leaders and the governing body are promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination satisfactorily. They are beginning to examine data about how well different groups of pupils are achieving, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals and those from more vulnerable circumstances. Procedures for safeguarding the pupils meet statutory requirements. Staff training in child protection is regularly updated as new appointments are made. Policies are effective and regularly reviewed. Safe recruitment of staff is fully established and underpinned by detailed record keeping. Leadership and management of the curriculum are improving. Subject coordinators are now being given more prominent leadership roles to enhance their effectiveness. The satisfactory curriculum is broad and balanced but not yet catering for the needs of more-able pupils well enough.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

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## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Marshside Primary School, Southport, PR9 9XA**

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. You were all very friendly and helpful and we enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on.

You told us how you enjoy school and feel cared for by the adults. There is very little bullying and you said the adults are quick to solve any issues of concern. Your behaviour is good and we were impressed by the way you think up ideas to raise money for charity. You are also given good opportunities to help run the school. The children in the Reception class get off to a great start. However, this is not kept up in later years and the speed at which you learn is not yet good enough. This affects your prospects for the future. So we have given your school a notice to improve. This means the inspectors judge that your headteacher and staff can make the required improvements but that other inspectors will come back to check up on what has been done.

Your headteacher, staff and governing body have already begun the process and we want them to continue to help you all to improve your work in English and mathematics. We have given them a list of ways they can do this. It is mainly by teachers expecting nothing less than the best from you. It is about making sure the more-able pupils among you are given more challenging work. You also need to improve your handwriting skills and the vocabulary you use in your pieces of writing. In mathematics, the teachers need to give you more opportunities to use your skills of calculating to solve problems. Finally, they need to explain clearly when they mark your work how you can improve it and what are the next steps to take.

You can all help by trying hard at all times and being determined to do your very best. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Carruthers  
Lead inspector

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