

Marpool Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113096
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357261
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Brown
Headteacher	Rachel Pattison
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons taught by 16 teachers and held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, the care and welfare of pupils and development planning. The responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 77 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Pupils' attainment and progress, especially in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, and the impact of the school's work to improve the progress of girls.
- The impact of the school's work to improve teaching and assessment.
- The quality of safeguarding, and of partnerships with parents, carers and others, to see if they are better than the school assesses.
- The impact of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage on the outcomes for children.

Information about the school

The school is of average size and serves part of a coastal town. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most commonly, their needs relate to delayed speech and language development and to behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils that join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above average. The governing body provides a breakfast club for pupils. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are educated in a Nursery and two Reception classes. These are organised as a single unit. Childcare is provided after school in the school building, but this is not managed by the governing body and was not inspected on this occasion.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Under the able leadership of the headteacher and other senior leaders it is improving rapidly. On leaving at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. In mathematics, there has been a steady rise in attainment over the last few years, but in English, improvement has been more erratic. In 2009, senior leaders identified that some girls underachieved. A range of steps were taken to rectify this and in 2010, girls' attainment improved significantly. Inspectors saw examples of this work, where girls lacking in confidence were encouraged to share and explain their work to the rest of the class and responded well to the praise and encouragement they received. However, progress across the school is not yet good as the quality of teaching is too variable. The best is outstanding, but there are lessons where the teacher talks to the whole class for too long, and the tasks given are not sufficiently well matched to individual needs to ensure good progress, for instance in developing currently weak writing skills. Senior leaders have identified these weaknesses and are tackling them effectively.

Many features of the school are good and in a few cases are outstanding. Children and pupils are kept exceptionally safe, as is recognised by the pupils themselves and by their parents and carers, who express a very high level of confidence in the school. Excellent links with parents and carers are enhanced by good communications and start with the attention given to the high quality induction of children joining the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to receive a good level of care and support throughout the school, with the involvement of external agencies as appropriate. This contributes especially to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The good curriculum is a further strength of the school. Pupils are excited by the range of activities and enjoy coming to school, as is shown by their above average attendance. Much of the curriculum focuses on outdoor activities, as was seen when Nursery and Reception children cared for their goats, 'Salt' and 'Pepper'. Pupils behave well and have tolerant attitudes towards each other. Their understanding of people of different faiths and cultures is satisfactory but is not extensive, reflecting the school's satisfactory promotion of community cohesion.

Leaders and managers are ambitious for the school and demonstrate a strong drive to improve teaching and hence pupils' progress. Their determination for the school to be a fully inclusive community is reflected in the strong support of parents, carers and staff. Self-evaluation is accurate and weaknesses are identified and tackled. The successful progress to date, for example in raising pupils' attainment in mathematics and improving teaching that is less than good, reflects the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, ensure that all pupils are making good progress in English by:
 - developing a consistent approach to the teaching of writing, spelling and the presentation of work throughout the school
 - ensuring that guidance shows all pupils how to improve their work.
- By September 2011 ensure that teaching is consistently good by:
 - enabling the features of excellent teaching already present in some lessons to be used more widely throughout the school
 - improving the consistency with which assessment is used to plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that the pace and structure of lessons continually engage all pupils in learning.
- Enhance opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of the range of faiths and cultures present in the United Kingdom and global society by:
 - using opportunities that arise in day-to-day teaching to develop this understanding
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to interact with those of other faiths and cultures.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are below, and sometimes well-below, those that are expected for their age, especially in their social and emotional development and in their communication skills. In their social and emotional development they make good progress throughout the school and increasingly become enthusiastic learners who behave well and make a good contribution to the school and local community, for example as members of the school council, helping younger children and those with disabilities, and by organising the Christmas Market for parents and carers.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of personal safety, for example when using the internet, and can assess risk and be adventurous without placing themselves or others in danger. They also understand the importance of a healthy diet and exercise, as shown when 20 pupils arrived at 8.00am on a snowy morning to take part in an excellent, vigorous gymnastics club.

Progress in developing skills of communication, and to a lesser extent those of mathematics and information and communication technology, while satisfactory, is more erratic. In some classes, these skills develop well, for example when pupils in Years 3 and 4 developed their own Greek myths, creating writing that used sophisticated sentences with a good range of vocabulary that was spelled accurately. These pupils also showed a good knowledge of the subject matter, for example of the myths of Daedalus and Icarus, and Theseus and the Minotaur. In other lessons, however, pupils made slower progress because the tasks were less well matched to their learning needs leading, for example, to writing that was incomplete and inaccurate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or

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disabilities are supported by effective teaching assistants who know their needs well and hence these pupils make good progress.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In the majority of lessons observed, teaching was good or outstanding. These lessons were conducted at a good pace using an interesting variety of tasks and strategies that held pupils' interest and were well matched to their learning needs; for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were asked to locate errors in multiplication sums, the complexity of which was matched to their level of attainment. In most lessons, pupils' skills of working independently or in small groups are developed well. However, in some lessons the teacher talks for too long, causing some pupils to become restless, and the tasks given are less well matched to their learning needs, especially when the class contains pupils of a wide range of ages and abilities. Generally, the planning of these satisfactory lessons meets the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are well supported, better than it does those of other pupils. In the best teaching, work was carefully marked with helpful comments and pupils assessed their own and each other's work. These assessments were then used well to plan lessons. However, these features were not present in all teaching, for example high quality presentation of work is not adequately promoted by all teachers.

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Pupils are excited by the curriculum, especially the opportunities it presents to work outdoors, where they enjoy exploring the grounds and local environment, taking part in trips and visits and using information and communication technology. Pupils have less opportunity to learn about and mix with those of other faiths and cultures. An excellent range of additional activities is available to them. For some the day starts with the good breakfast club which they attend of their own volition to socialise with friends and get the day off to a good start. The good care the school provides starts with a home visit by nursery staff before children start school and ends with good transition arrangements with the local secondary school. Parents and carers speak very warmly about the school's support. 'They have made the transition the best it could have been', said a parent/carer of a pupil who started at the school other than at the usual time.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are passionate to bring about the school's success. Through effective self-evaluation, they have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses and have put in place good plans to rectify the latter. Success has been achieved with mathematics, girls' achievement and more recently in improving the teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders are now determined to improve teaching and have made a good start in raising teachers' expectations and tackling weaknesses in the use of assessment, although they realise there is still some way to go.

The members of the governing body are effective in supporting the school and in challenging senior leaders to bring about improvements. They have successfully ensured that all requirements to keep children safe are in place and of a high standard, such as the level of training of staff in child protection. There is a good commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity, for example for those who join the school after the usual time, and to ensure that any potential discrimination is not tolerated. The governing body has given a lower priority to the requirement to promote community cohesion, although good work has been done to ensure that the school is outward-looking within the local community. ♦

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The dynamic leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has successfully implemented major change since her appointment in September 2009. Children in both Nursery and Reception have a good mix of activities that they choose themselves, developing skills of independence, or which are led by adults. A strength is the support children are given by adults to promote learning during their play. A child was making snowflakes out of Playdough. 'How many snowflakes have you made?' 'What shape are they?' These were examples of an adult's questioning. Children make good progress with their social and emotional development.

While the proportion of children attaining the expected levels in some other aspects of their learning at the end of Reception in 2010 was below average, rapid improvement is taking place. This is especially so in children's communication skills since a new approach to teaching letters and sounds, tailored to meet each child's needs, was introduced in September 2010. While it is too early to be certain of the long-term impact on children's progress, early signs are very promising. Children's welfare is given a high priority and outside agencies are used well to give additional support to those who need it. Induction arrangements are effective and there are very good links with parents and carers.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

All the parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire agreed that the school keeps their child safe. Almost all agreed with the other positive statements about the school. Parents and carers were notably positive about the school's good care for their children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are also views with which inspectors endorse.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marpool Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 326 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	73	20	26	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	50	65	27	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	51	33	43	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	58	26	34	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	49	64	27	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	62	26	34	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	62	25	32	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	43	33	43	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	51	34	44	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	45	39	51	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	45	38	49	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	64	27	35	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	69	20	26	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marpool Primary School, Exmouth EX8 3QW

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school, especially to those of you who talked with us and showed us your work. We especially enjoyed seeing you caring for your goats 'Pepper' and 'Salt', even though one of them nibbled our papers!

Yours is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly because your headteacher and other senior leaders are doing a good job. You behave well, know how to keep healthy and are very good at keeping yourselves safe. We were very impressed that so many of you arrived in the snow at 8.00am for gymnastics club. In your lessons you make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and your attainment at the end of Year 6 is average. Those of you who need a bit of extra help make good progress. Your progress is improving because teaching is improving.

You enjoy school because there are lots of interesting things to do and your attendance is above average. The staff take good care of you all and your parents and carers are pleased with the school.

To make the school even better, we have asked the staff to do three things. The first is to make sure you make better progress, especially with your writing. You can help by trying to write neatly, to finish your work and ask for help if you get stuck. Many of your lessons are already good but we have asked the staff to make sure all your activities are not too hard or too easy for you, and that you do not have to spend too long listening to the teacher. We have also asked that you are taught more about the different people who live in the United Kingdom and the world.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler

Lead inspector

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