

Marston Montgomery Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112589
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357139
Inspection dates	29–30 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Hinds

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kenneth Bull
Headteacher	Carol Fenton
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. She observed three teachers and visited eight lessons. The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. She observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, performance data, pupils' work, whole-school and subject development plans, numerous policies and school documents. The responses to questionnaires from pupils and 38 parents and carers were also considered.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school in maintaining recent improvements in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching and its impact upon the progress of more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 and boys in English.
- The effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of the school in making and sustaining improvements.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than other primary schools. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none are from homes where English is not the first language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. The school has gained a number of awards including Activemark and Healthy Schools status. The school has an after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

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. The headteacher has worked with determination and drive to bring about rapid improvement. Because of long-term instability in the leadership prior to her appointment, staff lacked a common sense of purpose and there was no drive to improve standards which had declined after the previous inspection. However, the indomitable spirit of the headteacher has galvanised all staff, pupils, governors and parents resulting in a reversal of this downward trend. The headteachers' ability to gain the support of others has been a significant driver in establishing an outstanding partnership with parents. Attainment is now average. Progress has improved significantly over the last two years and from being inadequate is now good in both English and mathematics. This reflects strong capacity for sustained improvement. Leadership at all levels has been strengthened. The role of subject leaders and governors has improved significantly and they are all key players in ensuring accurate self-evaluation which is based on:

- accurate assessments and effective tracking of pupils' progress
- the setting of challenging targets
- effective strategies to raise pupils' achievement
- improved systems for managing the performance and accountability of staff
- regular monitoring of all aspects of the school's work
- effective development planning and identification of priorities for improvement.

Staff know the pupils well and all are nurtured as unique individuals. As a consequence, pupils' personal development is good and has some notable strengths. Excellent attention is given to safety, resulting in pupils feeling exceptionally safe. Parents also have great confidence in the school's ability to ensure that their children are kept safe. Pupils have an outstanding appreciation of how to stay healthy. Their diet is excellent thanks to the school cook who provides healthy lunches, often based on the pupils' own menus and produce that they grow. Pupils enjoy all that the school has to offer and this is reflected in their outstanding attendance. They behave courteously and are eager to help one another. The school has increased the extent to which pupils' engage in decision-making. However, there is still more work to be done to enable younger pupils to take on leadership roles and for all pupils to be fully consulted on issues which have an impact on their learning.

The profile of teaching has improved, although teaching is not consistently good in all year groups which creates significant variations in the progress pupils make across the school. This is because strategies to raise the quality of teaching are not applied consistently. As a result of this, some pupils do not know their targets or what they need to do to improve.

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Pupils are not given time to practise or extend skills that have been identified in the feedback given. Furthermore, there are lost opportunities for teachers to question pupils effectively to assess and interrogate their understanding and adjust their teaching so that all abilities are challenged, especially the more able. Similarly, some activities lack relevance and do not motivate pupils because they do not encourage pupils to find out things for themselves and to take responsibility for their own learning, through planning their own investigations and evaluating their own progress towards the lesson objectives.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - sharpening the target-setting and marking procedures so that all pupils know and understand exactly what they are trying to achieve, whether they have achieved it and what they need to do to improve still further
 - providing time for pupils to practise and act on specific advice
 - improve teachers' questioning skills and the ways they assess pupils' understanding so that they can adjust their teaching to provide greater challenge, especially for the more-able pupils
 - developing pupils' skills in assessing and identifying for themselves the next specific steps they need to take to improve their own learning.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - providing more opportunities for independent and interactive learning which require pupils to plan their own work
 - engaging all pupils by giving them more opportunities for investigative work, role play and drama which are generated by pupils' interests, ideas and experiences
 - consulting pupils more specifically on the quality of teaching and learning and using this information to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum
 - ensuring that the younger pupils have more opportunities for leadership roles.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Attainment on entry varies significantly year on year because of very small cohorts but is broadly in line with national expectations. Effective teaching in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2 is helping most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Here, pupils are keen to do well because activities are interesting and they are well matched to their abilities. Pupils display high levels of concentration and apply themselves diligently. In these lessons, teachers' enthusiasm motivates pupils and they rise to the teachers' high expectations.

The recent implementation of peer mediation and the buddy system has had a positive impact on pupils' moral development and their sense of responsibility. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong. There are many opportunities to enable pupils to appreciate

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different cultural and social values through visitors and visits. For example, there are visits to a Buddhist temple and the Holocaust centre, as well as an exchange with a school whose intake is more diverse. The school is developing national and global partnerships and have recently established links with a Spanish and Ugandan school.

Pupils' contribution to the school and the wider community is good. They have recently been involved in raising funds through their Harvest Festival for the local homeless centre. They participate in well-dressing and country dancing and pupils in Year 6 organise an annual fund-raising event for the McMillan home. The school council is influential in decision-making, for example, in planning how to revitalise the school pond. However, although the younger pupils are members of the school council, they do not take on wider responsibilities. Although pupils' views are regularly sought, their ideas are not systematically gathered and used to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum.

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
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?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the proportion of good teaching is increasing. In the best lessons seen in the inspection, planning was skilfully matched to pupils' abilities, based on pupils' prior learning, with clear links to their current learning. For example, in one mathematics lesson, a money-solving problem required pupils to practise their mental strategies. This was followed by targeted questioning to explain and justify why they had 'put in their head the biggest number', prompting other pupils to use this effective

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strategy. Learning was then developed further by an open-ended problem-solving activity which challenged all abilities and ages. Similarly, in a literacy lesson, pupils were given clear guidance on what they were expected to learn by the end of the lesson; steps to success were identified collaboratively and the pace was maintained through effective questioning to assess what progress pupils were making through teacher and peer assessment. These powerful and empowering methods to accelerate pupils' progress create a greater sense of responsibility and independence, but they are not used consistently or as effectively in all year groups. Pupils' motivation wanes when lessons are dominated by the teacher talking too much and do not allow pupils to find out things for themselves. In these lessons, there is often a lack of clarity about what pupils are expected to learn, work is not linked to their targets and feedback is superficial.

The curriculum is satisfactory and the school has rightly identified this as an area for development. Key skills, including information and communication technology, are soundly developed across the curriculum. However, an over-reliance on worksheets inhibits pupils' ability to plan independently, and to investigate and evaluate their work especially in science. Equally, there are not enough experiences to develop pupils' creativity and for them to see links between subjects, for example, through drama in English.

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures to strengthen pupils' personal development and welfare have been very successful. The recent focus on improving behaviour through a review of the behaviour policy and implementation of peer mediation have had a strikingly positive effect on pupils' behaviour which had previously been a barrier to some pupils' learning. Provision for pupils who are potentially vulnerable is good. The positive play initiative has provided an oasis of calm where pupils can have some quiet time or discuss their issues with someone they trust. This is having a positive impact on their self-esteem and behaviour.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has inspired confidence and a 'can-do culture' in which everyone now has the motivation and determination to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential. Morale is high and teamwork is a real strength of the school. All leaders play a significant role in driving forward improvements. Furthermore, this is beginning to have a real impact on raising pupils' achievement and other outcomes for pupils, including behaviour. However, challenging targets are not always achieved because of some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and assessment strategies.

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The governing body is fully involved in school improvement planning, self-evaluation and target setting. As a result, they both support and challenge leaders and this has been helpful in removing barriers to learning. The headteacher has worked exceptionally hard to ensure that parents are well informed about their children's achievements. They are widely consulted and involved in whole-school issues, for example, in revising the school's vision statement. The school works well with external agencies to promote pupils' personal development and well-being. Their work with behavioural support staff and other specialists has enhanced the provision for potentially vulnerable pupils. The school works closely with the local secondary school and this provides invaluable experiences for more-able pupils, and for all pupils in sport, science and information and communication technology. Equality of opportunity and how well the school tackles discrimination are satisfactory. The improved procedures for evaluating the performance and experiences of pupils are good. This information is used to target specific actions for improvement, but is not yet embedded to ensure consistently good progress across the school. Safeguarding procedures are robust and all recommended good practice has been adopted. Community cohesion is satisfactory because, although it is good at a local level because they contribute to numerous activities within the immediate community, pupils' global awareness is less well developed.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the time they enter Year 1 almost all are at least in line with national expectations and in some areas they are above, especially in their personal development and early basic literacy and mathematical skills. They learn and develop well, making at least good progress in their personal development and in early reading, writing and calculation skills. Effective induction procedures and excellent links with parents and carers ensure that children are

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happy and settled. They develop good attitudes to learning and form very effective relationships with adults and other children. Adults are skilled in supporting children's learning through effective questioning and intervening at appropriate and significant times. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and those which the children select for themselves, both inside and outside the classroom. However, although the environment is welcoming, it does not provide a stimulating and creative experience for the children to develop their imagination and independence as effectively as it could. Good leadership and management have created a hardworking team with high aspirations. Children's learning is assessed regularly and the information is used well to inform planning and to assess how well children are making progress. Children's welfare is given the highest priority.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires show that they are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of all that the school does. They recognise the significant improvement made in recent years and appreciate the highly individualised care and support provided. The school has responded well to the requests from parents and carers to engage them more in whole-school decision-making and in enabling them to support their children's learning and personal development.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marston Montgomery 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 50 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	89	4	11	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	87	5	13	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	71	11	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	55	14	37	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	68	11	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	71	11	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	95	2	5	0	0	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)	32	84	4	11	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	61	14	37	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	66	12	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	82	7	18	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	87	5	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	82	7	18	0	0	0	0

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.



1 December 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Marston Montgomery Primary School, Ashbourne, DE6 2FF

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and the help you gave me in finding out more about your school. I think your school offers a satisfactory standard of education, but it is improving very quickly. There are a number of good and outstanding things in your school. Some of these are:

- standards in your work are rising and most of you are making faster progress
- you feel very safe in school and you behave well
- you have an outstanding awareness of healthy living
- your attendance is also outstanding
- your headteacher is doing a good job to help the school to improve and has built up excellent partnerships with your parents and carers.

In order to ensure your school continues to improve, these are the things I would like your school to do:

- improve how well your teachers question you so that you have to explain more about what you are thinking
- make sure that teachers' marking gives you clear pointers on what you need to do next to improve
- develop your skills in planning and assessment so that you can organise your own work and identify for yourselves what you have achieved and what you need to do next to improve
- make learning more active and interesting through more drama and role play
- talk to some of you on a regular basis to see what you think about your learning
- provide more opportunities for some of the younger ones amongst you to take on more jobs of responsibility.

You will see that although the list above has improvements for your teachers, these are linked to things that you will have to do to ensure that these improvements are achieved. I hope you continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your very best in all that you do.

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds

Lead inspector

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