

Marvels Lane Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 100696 |
| Local Authority | Lewisham |
| Inspection number | 354868 |
| Inspection dates | 25–26 January 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Sarah McDermott |

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 | 376 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev Gavin Berriman |
| Headteacher | Edward Dove |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 January 2011 |
| School address | Riddons Road Grove Park London SE12 9RA |
| Telephone number | 02088573904 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 16 lessons taught by 16 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised pupils' work and looked at the data the school had collected on pupils' academic progress and attendance. They also looked at the school development plan, investigated procedures for keeping pupils safe and analysed the responses to questionnaires from pupils, staff and 95 parents and carers.

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

- The extent to which different groups of pupils, such as White British boys, achieve as well as others.
- The consistency of the quality of the teaching and learning in ensuring high standards in writing across the curriculum.
- The success of the school in tackling below-average attendance rates and reducing persistent absenteeism.
- The effectiveness of middle managers and subject leaders in identifying and successfully addressing any underachievement.

Information about the school

Marvels Lane is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Over half of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups from Black African and Black Caribbean heritage. About a third of pupils speak English as an additional language and approximately a fifth are at early stages of learning the language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. These pupils have a variety of needs, mostly relating to moderate learning difficulties. More pupils than usual arrive at school at times other than the beginning of a term. The school has the Artsmark Gold and Activemark awards. The governing body manages a breakfast club. There is a children's centre on site but this was not part of the 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Marvels Lane Primary is a good school where attainment and achievement have been improving year on year. Pupils make good progress from their points of entry and leave in Year 6 with attainment in line with national averages for English and mathematics. Attainment in writing is not as high as it is in reading. The headteacher and his senior team successfully ensure that pupils make equally good progress in every class, because they keep a careful eye on each pupil's achievement term by term. Should any pupil be dropping behind, teachers are quick to find an effective way to get them back on track. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, aided by accurate matching of activities to the different abilities within a class. Marking is regular and encouraging, but does not consistently involve pupils in evaluating their own work against their learning targets. Within literacy lessons teachers are working well to improve pupils' writing skills. Pupils are growing in confidence to write for different audiences. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise their improved writing abilities in subjects other than English lessons.

Parents and carers are happy with all the school does for their children. One parent commented, 'The school staff have made it a place where my child feels safe and happy', and another said, 'My daughter has really learnt an awful lot and finds learning fun and exciting'. Inspection evidence confirms that the school provides good quality care and attention. Pupils are safe and sound. In particular, staff are adept at welcoming pupils who arrive at different times throughout the year, often speaking very little English. Teachers plan an interesting range of lively activities in lessons and trips out of school to bring different experiences to the pupils. Fencing club, salsa dance lessons and African drumming sessions are just a few of the exciting range of extra-curricular clubs. Pupils behave very well in lessons and during assemblies, but do not have enough opportunities to give their suggestions on how to improve break times. Year 6 pupils are proud to be school councillors, taking on their responsibilities with great maturity. However, their role is not sufficiently developed to ensure pupils of other ages can easily access them and give them their views. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Senior leaders have an accurate overview of the school's performance and know what needs improving. Challenging targets are giving a good focus for further improvement. The governing body is supportive and acts as a good 'sounding board' for the headteacher. The school has successfully tackled the key issues raised at the last inspection and has moved its overall effectiveness from satisfactory to good. Improving pupils' attendance levels and raising attainment, for example, demonstrate that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in writing to at least national averages by:
 - ensuring pupils have interesting opportunities to write at length in subjects other than literacy
 - improving pupils' evaluation of their own writing through sharper marking and checking against their learning targets.
- Increase pupils' contribution to school life by:
 - ensuring pupils have effective ways to offer their ideas and suggestions to help in the running of the school
 - extending their responsibility for organising constructive activities in the playground at break times.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils, whatever their ethnic background, make good progress from their below-average starting points. The school is quick to identify the learning needs of pupils who arrive from abroad mid-term speaking little English and soon they are making just as good progress as others. White British pupils, although sometimes not as confident as other pupils, make similarly good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities appreciate the special attention given to them by school staff and external professionals. They make equally good progress because staff know their precise needs and adapt teaching methods carefully to help them achieve well. More-able pupils also make good progress, but occasionally are held back because the pace of learning is not as lively as it could be.

In lessons, pupils learn positively because they quickly pick up expected routines, get down to work promptly and are enthusiastic to find out more. Pupils are becoming more self-reliant in 'having a go' at challenging tasks. In a good English lesson, pupils were proud they could successfully change sentences from a chatty, informal style into more formal sentences. They relish the feeling of achievement without having to resort to adult help. Pupils work well in pairs and groups to bounce ideas off each other, but also tackle tasks independently. In an excellent mathematics lesson, pupils were very skilled in checking their own progress and understanding as they went along. Most pupils are clear about what they should be learning by the end of the lesson, but pupils do not always demonstrate the basic skills in writing that they should be improving over the longer term and across other subjects.

Pupils love coming to school. This is borne out by their enthusiasm on arrival at the school gates and their improved attendance levels. Attendance rates mirror the national average and persistent absenteeism has been successfully reduced. A large proportion of pupils walk to school and good numbers join active after-school clubs. Most pupils have healthy, well-balanced eating habits, but a few do not willingly choose salad, fruit or vegetables at lunchtime. Pupils feel safe and know they can turn to the adults in the school should they be worried. Behaviour, especially in lessons, is good because pupils are clear about rules and know what is acceptable and what is not. During a Key Stage 2 assembly, pupils were extremely sensible and reflected thoughtfully on the 'key value' of confidence. However, out at play a few pupils sometimes do not realise that their lively games can be unsettling for younger and smaller pupils. Pupils take on a satisfactory range of jobs and

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responsibilities around the school. However, they are not all contributing sufficiently to ideas about improved organisation of the playground. Pupils know their suggestions are valued but, other than Year 6 who make up the school council, they are not sufficiently clear about how their suggestions are taken forward. With average and improving literacy and numeracy skills and a growing confidence in their abilities, pupils are satisfactorily prepared to move on to secondary school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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?

Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils, so pupils are at ease in their learning and want to do the best for their teachers. Teaching is enthusiastic with lively introductions and interesting activities. Most teachers use assessment information accurately to plan for the differing abilities in each class, so pupils have work pitched at just the right level for them. Occasionally, however, lack of pace results in the learning of the more-able pupils slowing down. Teachers support and guide pupils sensitively. For example, in a good numeracy lesson the teacher set a final, simpler calculation for a pupil who found fractions difficult by saying, 'Don't be disheartened ♦ let's finish off on a good note'. Invariably teachers conclude the lesson positively for all pupils by clarifying what has been learnt. Marking of work is always positive. It is beginning to encourage pupils to be more rigorous in checking the quality of their work and seeing if it could be improved, but is not consistent across all classes.

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The curriculum meets the needs of the large majority of pupils well. It includes interesting trips to broaden the pupils' experiences and add to their learning and life skills. Sport, music and dance play important parts in the life of the school as recognised by the Artsmark and Activemark awards. Display around the building is eye-catching and linked very well to the pupils' learning. When pupils need extra support linked to their particular need, small group work helps them achieve well. Teachers are working well in literacy lessons to emphasise the importance of writing skills in everyday life, but do not always ensure that writing is an important feature in other lessons.

Good care and attention are paid to each pupil, whatever their background or needs. The Pupil Parent Support worker ensures the school works together effectively with pupils' families for the best of their children's welfare. One parent commented, 'My child has special needs and the school has pulled out all the stops to ensure all her requirements are met; she is happy and is fully included in all of the school's activities'. The school is well organised and rigorous in ensuring all pupils are safe and sound while in its care. The breakfast club is well run, providing a safe and stimulating place where pupils of different ages can mix positively before school starts.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| 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?

The headteacher and his team of well-established senior and phase leaders have been working methodically and successfully to raise attainment and achievement. They keep a valuable bank of assessment data, regularly updated, so they can identify trends in progress and nip any underachievement in the bud. The detailed school development plan reflects a thorough analysis of performance and gives a clear vision of how the school can improve further. Challenging targets focus the minds of all staff on getting the best out of their pupils. Subject leaders are growing in confidence, but the systems to hold them to account for pupils' achievement are insufficiently rigorous.

The governing body knows the context of the school well and has been instrumental in bringing about improved school performance. It is fully versed in safeguarding procedures, which are good, and regularly checks that recruitment and child protection systems meet legal requirements. The school works well with other organisations to bring creativity and added interest to the curriculum and to support pupils with specific needs. The promotion of equal opportunities is good and results in all pupils making equally good progress in their learning. The school is attentive in making sure no pupil is discriminated against or misses out on any activity or outing they want to participate in. The school promotes community cohesion well. It is proud of the wealth of cultures and diverse backgrounds of

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its pupils and keeps a close eye on the achievement of different groups. The school is a happy, close-knit community with good links with parents and carers and initial contacts with schools in different parts of the United Kingdom and further afield.

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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, social development and number. They make good progress and now enter Year 1 with the expected knowledge and skills. The quality of teaching and the activities provided have improved since the last inspection, preparing children well to meet their early learning goals. Very good relationships with parents and carers help adults to provide effective welfare to each child because they know their home circumstances and understand their particular needs. Safeguarding is of a high standard.

The learning environment is bright and colourful with an appealing range of stimulating resources. At every turn, both inside and outside, children have opportunities to find out more and improve their skills. Adults successfully encourage children to grow in independence and take responsibility for their actions. When children ask for help to put on their coats, adults gently and firmly show them how to start with the hood and then find the arms. Children are delighted when they find they can do this all by themselves. Plenty of conversation, introducing new vocabulary and correcting simple grammar, helps both English speaking children and those speaking limited English to make good progress in their language skills. Office-corners, clipboards or chalk on the pavement entice children to develop their writing skills. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage means adults in the Nursery and Reception classes are constantly finding ways to improve practice. They are working to make better use of tracking

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information to plan effectively for individual needs and to ensure the transition of children to Year 1 is as smooth as possible.

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

An average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded are pleased with the way their children are looked after and the progress they are making. Nearly all parents and carers agree that their children are happy and safe at school. Despite the qualms of a very small minority about the way the school deals with incidents of bullying, the inspectors found that the school deals with bullying and inappropriate behaviour effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marvels Lane 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 376 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 58 | 51 | 55 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 67 | 59 | 46 | 40 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 60 | 53 | 52 | 46 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 62 | 54 | 44 | 39 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 60 | 53 | 51 | 45 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 53 | 46 | 57 | 50 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 60 | 53 | 50 | 44 | 2 | 2 | 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) | 43 | 38 | 56 | 49 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 39 | 34 | 60 | 53 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 50 | 44 | 55 | 48 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 36 | 32 | 63 | 61 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 48 | 42 | 58 | 51 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 58 | 51 | 52 | 46 | 1 | 1 | 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 | 59 | 35 | 3 | 3 |
| Primary schools | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 13 | 36 | 41 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 39 | 43 | 3 |
| Special schools | 35 | 43 | 17 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 21 | 42 | 29 | 9 |
| All schools | 13 | 43 | 37 | 8 |

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



27 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marvels Lane Primary School, Grove Park SE12 9RA

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. Yours is a good school. You make good progress in English and mathematics. Teaching is nearly always good because lessons are well organised, teachers make sure you know what you should learn and they give you work that is just right most of the time. You have exciting activities and interesting trips arranged for you. Your headteacher and his team of senior teachers lead the school well and they know what needs improving.

Most of you behave very well, although sometimes at playtime a few of you are over boisterous. We particularly like the way pupils from many different backgrounds get on so well together. We are impressed with the way you lead active lives and play plenty of sport but a few of you do not eat enough fruit, salad or vegetables. Well done in improving your attendance!

To make your education better, we have asked your school to do the following:

- Help you to improve your writing by giving you chances to write more in lessons other than literacy and by encouraging you to check you are producing the best writing you can.
- Provide more chances for you to give your ideas and suggestions about how school can be improved, particularly through the school council.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers make your school a very special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to do your best in your learning and to enjoy your time at Marvels Lane Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott

Lead inspector

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