

Marlborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100483
Local Authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	354853
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Anstruther
Headteacher	Jessica Finer
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons observing 10 teachers and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and members of the governing body, including the chair. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. Inspectors analysed 107 parental questionnaires, 102 responses to the pupil survey and 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- Whether or not the school is building sufficiently in Years 3 to 6 on pupils' earlier achievement?
- How effective are the additional adults in classrooms in supporting the learning of all pupils?
- Whether or not the school's action to reduce absence is sufficiently robust and having an impact?
- How effectively does the school support the achievement and personal development of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable?

Information about the school

Pupil numbers are rising in this average-sized primary school as it expands to two forms of entry. Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and the large majority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average and considerably more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of the pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy and to speech and language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has recently achieved the Artsmark Gold award for a second time, and has also received the International School award. ◆

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

Marlborough Primary School has been on a path of steady improvement in recent years under the tenacious and determined leadership of the headteacher. Pupils make good and accelerating progress from their starting points so that attainment is broadly average and rising by the end of Year 6. Progress is most rapid by the end of Year 2, but concerted action to improve teaching and to increase the pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 is bearing fruit. The youngest children get off to a flying start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good progress, particularly in their personal development and also in their acquisition of English language skills. This is because they are taught well in a rich and interesting environment.

Teaching across the school is at least good and improving, which moves the pupils' learning forward rapidly. Lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of pupils and the large team of additional adults are briefed and deployed well to support learning. However, there are times when teachers do not use questioning well enough to extend the pupils' thinking. Marking and other feedback give pupils an immediate picture of how to improve their skills, but do not always show how they might meet longer-term goals for improvement. Furthermore, pupils do not consistently have time in class to respond to improvement points made by their teachers.

The pupils' mature approach to their studies makes a major contribution both to their progress and to making classrooms calm but exciting places for learning. Pupils' behaviour is good and has improved in recent years, as they, their parents and carers acknowledge. They are proud of their school and the contribution they make to its daily life and in supporting newcomers to settle in quickly. School life consists of many memorable experiences for the pupils. These include carefully planned topics to which they have an input, and visits, making use of the school's proximity to London museums, art galleries and palaces.

Teachers focus sharply on developing basic skills. Pupils develop their writing in a range of styles and subjects, but opportunities can be missed for them to apply their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning. The pupils' development benefits from outstanding levels of care, guidance and support. The staff team is acutely aware of the situations of pupils and their families, enabling them to direct action to support their specific needs, particularly where circumstances make them more vulnerable.

The headteacher is supported well by an able team of staff and governors. Her high expectations are reflected in challenging targets and by not tolerating any underperformance. The team is united in support of the drive to raise achievement and to eliminate any barriers to learning that pupils might face. Inspection evidence indicates that

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pupils in the present Year 6 are currently on track to attain better results than those achieved in 2010, which, nevertheless, represented good progress.

Marlborough Primary School has good capacity for sustained improvement and is well placed to meet the challenge of its expansion with confidence. Its recent record is one of steady improvement in achievement and teaching. Attendance is improving rapidly as a result of focused and concerted action, although not all parents fully support the school in its efforts. Staff and the governing body have a very clear picture of the school's qualities from which to plan for improvement. Self-evaluation has become sharper and, in involving staff and governors, it has become a more effective tool for monitoring and evaluating the school's planned actions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the pupils' progress by:
 - challenging their thinking through more effective questioning
 - giving time for them to respond to their teacher's marking
 - ensuring that they are clear about the steps they can take to meet long- term goals for improvement
 - providing increased opportunities for them to use ICT to support and extend their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are keen to do well. They greatly enjoy school, are motivated to learn and respond well to their teachers. When learning is at its most effective, particularly but not exclusively in the younger age groups, pupils work with interest and determination. They collaborate very effectively when working in groups or discussing their ideas with each other. They are confident learners because their contributions are clearly valued by their teachers and respected by others. Most pupils concentrate hard in lessons, and persevere with tasks even when they find them difficult. Learning loses its impetus and the pupils' interest diminishes on the few occasions when teachers do not engage them fully either through questioning or by providing interesting activities.

Starting points are well below average. Pupils' specific learning needs are identified early so that action can be tailored carefully to support their learning. As a result, pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress both academically and towards their personal targets. The focus from an early age on developing speaking and listening skills by immersing pupils in an environment rich in language enables those who speak English as an additional language also to make good progress.

Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds mix happily, showing much consideration and respect towards each other. They value greatly the diversity around them and enjoy learning about other customs and values. Links with schools in Kent and Kenya help them to see the world from a different perspective and, in the case of the latter, has contributed to the school's International Award. Pupils enjoy participating in musical and other creative activities and events. They are keen to be representatives on the school council and to take on other leadership roles around the school. Pupils not only say how safe they feel in

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school, but are also helped to cope with any risks they might face in their everyday lives. Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes healthy living, as shown by the high uptake of school meals and their readiness to participate in the wide range of sporting activities.

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	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	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?

Learning is well planned and carefully structured, with tasks, activities and methods based on a clear understanding of the next steps in each pupil's learning. The 'Learning Matrix' enables pupils to be clear about what they are learning. It also provides a valuable dialogue between pupils and their teachers about what has been successful and where further work is needed. Paired and group discussions are used skilfully to promote learning and to generate confidence in the pupils to share and express their ideas. Creative use is made of resources such as interactive whiteboards to add interest to learning.

The many interesting activities the pupils experience on a daily basis greatly enrich their learning and support their personal development. However, the use by pupils of new technology to support and extend their learning is limited. Topic themes link learning between subjects and are brought to life by visits to many places of interest. Specific events such as Victorian Week and the Year 3 project with Kensington Palace are also memorable experiences for the pupils. Sport and, particularly, the arts play a major part in school life which, in the case of the latter, is recognised in the Artsmark Gold award. Good

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use of various sports partnerships, as well as links with other providers, supports a wide range of much-valued clubs and extension activities for gifted and talented pupils.

The school provides an exceptionally welcoming environment for the pupils. This enables them to settle in smoothly at whatever time they arrive and feel safe and confident that any problems will be resolved quickly. The support for pupils whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable is a major strength of the school. Pupils are known as individuals and support is very carefully tailored to meet their specific needs. This support is built on a strong partnership with home and very extensive, well-coordinated and effective multi-agency support. The school has implemented many robust procedures that have led to improved attendance and punctuality, although a small number of parents and carers have not responded as positively as they might.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders are highly ambitious for the pupils. Morale is high among a staff team who are strongly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and tackling any forms of discrimination. Careful checks are undertaken of the performance of individuals and groups to spot any potential underachievement. As a result of the concerted action taken, there are no significant gaps in the achievement of different groups. Senior leaders are acutely aware of teaching standards and where action is needed to strengthen each individual's performance. Teachers have developed their skills through focused training, including observing and working alongside experts. Planning for improvement has improved and is based on sharper evaluation, but, occasionally, actions are not linked closely enough to the impact they are to have on outcomes for pupils.

Governance is good and improving, as the governing body take an increasingly active role in school life, planning for its improvement and checking on its performance. They regularly seek and act upon parental views. This has led to teachers providing more regular and frequent information about the curriculum in each class to parents and carers. The governing body ensure that safeguarding arrangements are implemented rigorously by staff and their impact carefully evaluated. Procedures include very careful checks on staff and a regular scrutiny of the site.

Many planned activities have helped to promote greater community cohesion well, based on a clear understanding of the context in which the school operates, although the impact of all activities has not been evaluated sharply. The international dimension to the school's work is strong. The school engages closely with families, particularly when they are new to this country. Activities such as the 'Talking Pens' project support parents and carers in

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helping their children with reading. Partnerships with outside agencies, including volunteer readers and close links with the local early intervention team to support more vulnerable pupils, have a considerable impact on learning and pupils' personal development.

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 settle in quickly to the life of the school because the environment in all classes is warm and welcoming. Children are happy and polite, and are confident to approach an adult and ask for help where needed. They behave well, show consideration for each other's feelings and form trusting relationships with adults. Children learn and develop well and are purposefully engaged by interesting activities. Assessment information is used to plan the next steps for each child and to direct them towards activities to meet their specific needs. Children become engrossed for long periods and work happily together.

Teaching is at least good and there is an appropriate balance of activities led by the adults and those initiated by the children. This helps them to become more independent as they select resources and plan their learning, although they do not always have sufficient access to new technology, including programmable toys. The indoor and outside areas provide a stimulating environment which supports all areas of learning and the development of language. Additional adults are deployed well during most sessions but not always effectively at the start of sessions.

Strong teamwork across the three classes is a key feature and the adults work together closely to improve their performance and quality of provision. Adults share in identifying where improvements can be made and in planning for their implementation. Careful attention is paid to safeguarding the well-being of the children, who consequently feel happy and secure because they know there is someone looking after them. The

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partnership with home is productive, although parents and carers are not always involved in contributing to their children's profile.

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

A larger proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than is generally the case in primary schools. The level of satisfaction is higher than that typically found for primary schools in response to all but one of the questions. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents and carers, particularly that their children are helped to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle and are well taught. The inspection team also endorses the view of parents and carers that the school is well led and managed. Inspection evidence does not support the views of a small number of parents and carers who believe that the school does not manage behaviour effectively, prepare their children well for the future or enable them to make sufficient progress. Inspectors investigated these concerns through an examination of documents, discussion with staff and pupils and by taking account of the large majority of the views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marlborough 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 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	61	41	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	59	39	36	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	42	51	48	9	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	49	42	39	10	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	49	49	46	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	42	49	46	12	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	49	48	45	4	4	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)	40	37	44	41	12	11	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	37	54	50	7	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	43	49	46	8	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	34	59	55	9	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	45	43	40	8	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	51	43	40	6	6	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	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.



11 March 2011



Dear Pupils



Inspection of Marlborough Primary School, London, SW3 3AP



Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We agree with your positive view of the school and have found that Marlborough Primary is good and improving. You clearly enjoy school and the activities provided including visits to places of interest and weeks such as when you studied the Victorians. Your teachers take excellent care of you and do the utmost to keep you safe. Your behaviour in lessons is good. We were impressed by the way you try hard to stay fit and healthy. You take all of your responsibilities seriously and are thoughtful in the way you help newcomers settle into school. You are also very aware of how to stay safe. You clearly enjoy the work in your topics, particularly as you have helped in their design.

The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The rest of you make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. Those of you new to learning English make good progress once you have developed the skills needed. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make good progress because of the support you receive.



The three things in particular we have asked the teachers and other adults to do in order to make the school better are to:

- extend your thinking through the questions they ask
- provide more opportunities for you to use computers in lessons
- give you time to respond to teachers' marking and help you to meet your targets.



You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and improving your attendance further. Well done for showing such pride in your school and in your achievements.



Yours sincerely



Martin Beale
Lead inspector

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