

The Malcolm Sargent Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120672
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358815
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Kath Campbell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	499
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Swanson
Headteacher	Tristan Revell
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 19 teachers and 23 lessons. Four lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and pupils. They also spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, child protection and safeguarding procedures. They looked at pupils' past and present work and scrutinised 101 questionnaires completed by pupils and 158 by parents and carers.

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

- Are standards reached by girls high enough in mathematics in Key Stage 2?
- Have inconsistencies in progress been eliminated in Years 3 and 4?
- Are the quality of teaching and use of assessment consistently good enough to promote good learning, particularly for higher attainers, in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and in writing throughout the school?
- Has the restructured leadership team been able to drive through improvement at a fast enough pace during a period of staffing instability?

Information about the school

The Malcolm Sargent is a larger-than-average school that serves a residential area on the outskirts of the town. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are low. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special needs, is below average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Gold Quality Mark for science in recognition of its work. Castlegate Montessori Nursery provides daily nursery education, breakfast, after school and holiday clubs throughout the year. This facility is not overseen by the governing body and therefore did not form 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

1

Main findings

The Malcolm Sargent is a good school that has made significant improvement since its previous inspection. Its most notable strength lies in its outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders have been instrumental in driving forward rapid improvement. Parents and carers regard the school highly. One parent expressed the views of many commenting, 'The school has come on leaps and bounds'. Inspection evidence supports their views.

In the 2010 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English and mathematics was high. Evidence taken from work seen indicates that the attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 rose again in 2011, because an impressively high proportion of pupils are working at higher levels. The outstanding quality of teaching in Year 6 is the key to the high standards achieved. Rigorous monitoring has contributed markedly to its overall quality. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve outstandingly well. Targeted areas for development, such as writing, have seen exceptional improvement. Very secure systems for tracking pupils' progress identify potential underachievement early and highly focused intervention strategies quickly get pupils back on track. A good example of the effectiveness of these systems can be seen in the attainment of older girls in mathematics. Until recently, girls did not always reach the standards of which they are capable. Tenacious monitoring has resulted in both boys and girls achieving equally highly in mathematics at the end of the current Year 6. However, progress is not totally consistent, particularly in mathematics and especially in Years 3 and 4. The school is starting to raise the profile of mathematics to secure the required improvement. Assessment procedures are much improved and are used far more effectively than in the past. Marking is good, with some exemplary practice in writing. However, it is not always used with enough precision to move pupils to the next step in mathematics.

The curriculum is good. Some features are outstanding, such as the provision for science, and the school richly deserves its recent Gold Quality Mark award. Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school activities that effectively develop good social skills. Through excellent links with partner institutions, pupils throughout the school have an outstanding approach towards keeping fit and healthy. The curriculum has been adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly of those in mixed-age classes. Opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects are developing well but are not yet leading to consistently good progress, particularly in Years 3 and 4. A particular strength of the school's good care, guidance and support is the wealth of opportunities provided to support pupils and families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher present a highly effective partnership that has been very successful in steering the school through a period of considerable change.

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Together, they have created an impressively good climate for learning where staff have a very strong commitment towards improvement. The school has also moved a very long way in a short space of time through the drive and determination of staff and governors. The governing body is very well led and monitors the work of the school effectively. Senior leaders have a precise perception of strengths and weaknesses and their self-evaluation is accurate. The overall picture is exceptionally positive. Excellent leadership, combined with highly effective tracking systems and pupils' rapidly accelerating progress, give the school an outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of progress in mathematics, particularly in Year 3 and Year 4, by:
 - raising the profile of mathematics
 - using marking more effectively to move pupils on to the next step and to let them know how well they are doing
 - improving pupils' problem solving and independent skills.
- Develop greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice that exists within the school
 - ensuring all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - increasing the number of opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum in order to ensure high quality outcomes for all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils typically start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are close to the levels expected of children at this age. As a result of good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children move into Year 1 with a higher-than-expected proportion having achieved the early learning goals. Until recently in Key Stages 1 and 2, although standards have been well-above average by the end of Year 6, rates of progress have been uneven because teaching has not always been good enough to promote consistently good learning. Inspection evidence shows that the current pace of progress is good overall, accelerating to outstanding at the end of Key Stage 2 because pupils receive teaching of the highest calibre. Intervention strategies to aid the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly effective because they are well matched to individual needs. Progress is meticulously monitored, enabling these pupils to make as much progress as others.

The school's focus on raising attainment in writing has played a strong part in the improved achievement. Pupils' books reflect a growing ability for them to write at length, through increased confidence and enjoyment. In mathematics, teachers match work to the needs of individual pupils with far greater precision than in the past because the quality of day-to-day assessment is markedly improved. This was observed at its most effective in an outstanding Year 6 lesson where pupils were working on a variety of activities, including converting fractions to decimals. The level of challenge was

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demanding, and higher-attaining pupils made outstanding progress because activities were carefully constructed to ensure complete understanding.

Attendance is above average because pupils of all ages enjoy school. They particularly value the wide range of sporting opportunities on offer. Parents and carers believe that their children feel safe and pupils know they are part of a very caring community. Inspection evidence supports these views. Behaviour is good though, occasionally, in less successful lessons, some pupils are fussy and are slow to settle to their work. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is outstanding. Pupils take their responsibilities, such as being 'Young Leaders' or house captains, very seriously. They are very 'eco aware' and learn to care about their environment through the many projects available. The school council is a very well respected group of pupils with an influential role in numerous aspects of school life, including fund raising. Pupils take part in a wealth of activities, such as the choir's imminent participation in the Lincoln Children's Festival. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show respect and care towards each other. Art and music play an important part in school life. By the time pupils leave, their high academic and secure personal skills ensure they are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	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	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
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

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How effective is the provision?

Lesson observations support the views of parents and carers that their children are taught well. There are many strengths within teaching and learning. Teachers' professionalism, their skilful use of questioning and clear explanations ensure pupils undertake their work with confidence. In Key Stage 1, teachers focus particularly effectively on developing pupils' competence in writing. They use assessment well to ensure tasks are accurately matched to pupils' abilities. In all classes, teaching assistants provide high-quality support and make a major contribution to the good learning of pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities. Providing pupils with the highest level of challenge is a feature common to the best lessons, enabling pupils to make exceptionally rapid progress. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own levels of understanding and this adds to their enjoyment of learning. Just occasionally, teachers talk for too long, leaving pupils with too little time to practise skills. In a few lessons, they miss opportunities to move pupils on to an even greater level of challenge.

The curriculum is rich and diverse. High levels of participation in a wide range of enrichment opportunities support pupils' enjoyment of school. Links with a wealth of outside providers, including an 'Artist in Residence' and very effective partnerships with other schools make an exceptional contribution to the breadth of the curriculum. The school has made great strides in embedding a creative curriculum that ensures learning takes place in meaningful contexts. Adaptations ensure the varying needs of pupils, particularly of those that are gifted and talented, are fully met. However, the overall quality is good rather than outstanding because it is not yet leading to consistently good learning for all groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics.

The school is a supportive community where pupils are able to thrive academically and socially. Pupils' care and welfare are a high priority. Pupils get on well together and this successfully maintains a happy, harmonious atmosphere. Those in need of personal support receive excellent guidance, enabling them to participate fully in school life. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance.

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 has a clear, reflective view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together with other senior leaders, he has developed a strong determination to secure rapid improvement. In their quest to gain greater consistency of practice, leaders at all levels monitor meticulously the quality of teaching and the progress of individual pupils.

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They are totally focused on eliminating underachievement. The restructured phase and curriculum teams have successfully moved the school forward at a brisk pace during a period of considerable staffing changes. Strategic planning is of the highest quality and is increasingly underpinned by precise data analysis of pupils' progress. Links with parents are very strong and are used with impressive effect to enhance pupils' learning. Governance is good. The governing body is knowledgeable, uses its expertise well and is firmly focused on raising performance. Safeguarding procedures are secure, meet requirements and follow good practice. The single central record, in particular, is maintained with exemplary precision. The school is a highly inclusive community where pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are valued as individuals. The school tackles discrimination very well. Pupils throughout the school learn to appreciate each other's success and show great care and consideration towards those who sometimes find learning hard. Community cohesion is good. Events, such as cultural awareness days sponsored by local businesses, are particularly effective in drawing together the school and wider community. A successful link with a more culturally diverse school ensures pupils are well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society. At a global level, the school is in the initial stages of developing a link with a school in China, but this is not yet fully established.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's progress is good overall. In targeted areas, such as early language and literacy development, it is outstanding. A good example of this was seen in an excellent session where children were learning about letters and sounds. Their level of participation was high because learning was fun. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities were particularly well supported, enabling them to enjoy success. The rapid pace of the lesson ensured children made huge strides in their

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learning in a very short space of time. The strong focus on children's personal, social and emotional development enables children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Staff create a nurturing environment where children feel secure. Parents and carers are given numerous opportunities to become involved in their children's learning right from the start. The high- quality outdoor area is an integral part of learning and children have freedom of choice to work indoors or outside. The balance between adult-led and independent activities promotes learning well. Occasionally, some independent activities lack sufficient challenge to extend the learning of more-able children. Teaching is of a consistently good quality and children make most progress when learning in small groups. Teachers and teaching assistants work together impressively well. The high ratio of adults to children enables those who need extra support to gain in confidence. Careful observations provide valuable insight into the progress of individual children. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. All staff have a clear grasp of strengths and weaknesses and a clear direction for improvement.

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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They particularly like the fact that their children feel safe and develop healthy lifestyles. They hold the headteacher in high regard, believe the quality of teaching is good and state that they are well informed about their child's progress. They also like the fact that their children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Very few parents expressed concerns and isolated comments tended to be of an individual nature. The lead inspector followed up any concerns raised with the school. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers to gain a wider view and found a high level of satisfaction. A few parents expressed concerns about the mixed-age classes. The inspection team found that the needs of pupils in all classes were being effectively met because teachers monitored the progress of individual pupils very well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Malcolm Sargent 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 158 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 499 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	66	48	30	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	111	70	45	28	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	82	52	68	43	1	1	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	90	57	50	32	9	6	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	101	64	52	33	3	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	78	49	71	45	7	4	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	95	60	61	39	1	1	1	1
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)	85	54	60	38	5	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	89	56	60	38	5	3	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	47	68	43	8	5	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	70	44	70	44	9	6	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	95	60	57	36	2	1	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	101	64	51	32	3	2	3	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Malcolm Sargent Primary School, Stamford, PE9 2SR

Thank you for looking after us so well when we came to see your school. We found you friendly and polite. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and we think the school council is doing a really good job. You should all be very proud of your work and of the high standards you reach. Some of you have had to work very hard to do so well. Your attendance is good and most of you enjoy school. You get on well with the adults who teach and care for you. You told us how much you enjoy all the clubs you have after school. We were very impressed with how you try to keep fit and healthy.

You go to a good school that has improved a lot since the last time it was inspected. Your headteacher is really good and is always trying to find ways to help you to do your very best. Your writing has improved a lot. You make good progress because you are taught well. Some of you make excellent progress. Those of you in Year 6 are well prepared for secondary school.

We have asked your school to do some things to help it improve even more. Some of the teaching is brilliant and we want it all to be as good as that. In mathematics, we want you to improve your problem solving skills. We have asked everyone to make sure you know how to improve each time you have your work marked. We also want you to have more chance to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.

Keep up that good attendance and those high standards. Well done everyone!

Best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Kath Campbell

Lead inspector

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