

Marnel Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116017
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379188
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Cheasley
Headteacher	Alison Baron
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2009
School address	Shetland Road Popley Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9PT
Telephone number	01256 328670
Fax number	01256 346891
Email address	adminoffice@marnel-jun.hants.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, taught by 12 teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leadership team, members of the governing body, teaching and support staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, the governing body minutes, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 95 pupils, 72 parents and carers, and 23 staff.

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

- The impact of measures to raise pupils' achievement and attainment throughout the school.
- Provision for cultural education and its impact on building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own, especially regarding the wider nature of modern society in the United Kingdom.
- The quality of teaching and learning, especially in catering for pupils' different abilities and needs, with a focus on the more-able pupils.
- The impact of possible behaviour issues on learning in the classroom and on pupils' welfare.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized junior school. A majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and most pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of this group of pupils have moderate learning difficulties, a few have emotional needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The school has gained several recent awards including Artsmark Gold and became a Church of England affiliated school in May 2011. The number of pupils on roll has increased significantly since the previous inspection due to an influx of pupils joining the school from a new housing development and the closure of a nearby school in September 2010.

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

This is a good school which prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. The headteacher and her enthusiastic staff have created an environment within the school where pupils feel valued as individuals. Pupils enjoy school and say that they are well looked after. As one pupil commented, 'Our teachers are friendly and really helpful if we have a problem.' Parents and carers value the good quality of education the school provides for their children and this was reflected in the very positive nature of their questionnaire replies. 'Both my children are thriving at the school' is typical of their many positive comments about the school.

The school is well led by a dedicated headteacher, who is effectively supported by a very able senior leadership team. Working together, they have ensured that the school has rigorously and accurately evaluated its performance and implemented improvements where needed. They provide a clear vision for the school and have high expectations of what pupils of all abilities are capable of achieving. This has been a key factor in ensuring that the school has been able to socially integrate a considerable number of pupils from a nearby closed-down school, some with challenging behaviour, who have then gone on to make good progress in learning. One response on a returned parent and carer questionnaire summed this up. 'My boy is really making good progress at Marnel and he was always in trouble at his last school.' It is also a clear indication of the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in all year groups and this reflects the good quality of teaching. The school has developed effective systems to track pupils' progress and to set pupils individual learning targets. However, there are occasions when the work set for the more-able pupils is not always well matched to their capabilities. As a result, these pupils do not consistently make the progress they are capable of. Even so, pupils' attainment in Year 6 is average, and this represents good progress and achievement for this cohort of pupils.

The school provides a consistently good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. Health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child-protection procedures are good. However, even though pupils display a good understanding of both the immediate world in which they live and also of the customs and traditions of people who live in different countries, their knowledge of the different cultures within the United Kingdom is limited.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the spring term 2012, improve the progress of the more-able pupils to be at least consistently good by ensuring that they are always provided with work that offers them the correct level of challenge.
- Increase pupils' awareness of modern society in the United Kingdom by improving opportunities for them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity of this country.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils respond very well to the caring approach taken by the school. They have good attitudes to learning, and this is reflected in their enjoyment of learning and in their above average, and improving, rates of attendance. Pupils' awareness of the importance of exercising regularly is good and pupils are eager to point out the benefits of eating healthy foods. The quality of their spiritual, moral and social development is strong, and this is reflected in pupils' good behaviour, politeness and respect for others. Their cultural awareness is less well developed. They understand the importance of staying safe and pupils say they are confident that any rare instances of anti-social behaviour will be dealt with quickly and fairly by adults.

Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and are well respected in the local community. They display a growing awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and understand the significance of the school becoming a Church of England affiliated school. They say that literacy and art are two of their favourite subjects and are well aware of the importance of the school gaining the Artsmark award. Older pupils say they are proud of their school and appreciate the friendly atmosphere. They are also well aware that the school council gives them a real voice in school affairs. Some Year 6 pupils even say that they are really not looking forward to leaving the school for good at the end of the summer term.

Their good overall progress in building up skills in mathematics, literacy, and information and communication technology (ICT), coupled with their good attitudes towards learning, is preparing them well for their future economic well-being. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and also those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in all year groups. However, the school has concentrated on ensuring that pupils requiring extra help with their learning are well supported and therefore make good progress. There has not yet been a similar whole-school focus on helping the more-able pupils to achieve to their full capabilities.

Pupils are confident that teachers will always help them if they are having difficulties with their learning in lessons. They say that teachers always ensure that pupils know what they have to do to improve their work. Pupils enjoy lessons, especially when teachers go the extra mile in order to make learning interesting. They are

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enthusiastic and work hard, and this was evident during an outstanding mathematics lesson focusing on fractions in Year 6. Pupils enjoyed learning because the work was very well matched to their different abilities and previous learning. The teacher ensured that those pupils requiring extra help were very well supported. In addition, the more-able pupils were encouraged to work independently and think about exactly what a ‘fraction’ was. As a result, all groups of pupils made outstanding progress in developing their understanding of equivalent fractions. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 made good progress developing their writing skills because they found the work they had to complete, about characters in stories, interesting and it was well matched to their previous learning.

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	2
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?

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and mixes different subjects together well in order to make learning interesting. It provides pupils with a range of experiences in order to help broaden their understanding of the world in which they live. It has been designed to make learning meaningful while focusing on promoting the effective development of skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT, and pupils comment that they like this approach to learning. The quality of work on display around the school is of a good standard and provides clear evidence that the curriculum is not just restricted to mathematics and English. Teachers and effective teaching assistants work enthusiastically together in order to make a positive contribution to pupils’ progress. Classrooms are well resourced and teachers make good use of modern technology to enhance lessons. However, there are occasions when lesson introductions are too long and pupils begin to lose interest in learning.

The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is good and this is the basis for their good personal development. Parents and carers value the way the school looks after their children and pupils say they are confident they will always be well cared for. Effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle into new routines and pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable receive good levels of well-targeted care and support. This enables them to play a full and active part in school life. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils enjoy visiting interesting places and talk excitedly about their recent residential trip to Germany where they lived with German families. They also like meeting interesting visitors to the school. Pupils appreciate the diverse programme of popular enrichment activities the school provides for them. These include after-school and lunchtime clubs featuring artistic, sporting and musical activities. However, the curriculum does not offer sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the wider nature of modern society in the United Kingdom.

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 good quality of leadership and management at all levels is evident in the school’s work. The school has developed a robust approach to improvement planning and is clear about the actions it has to take to improve further. The headteacher and staff

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work hard to ensure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed and that none is discriminated against. They are well supported by the governing body, which takes its duties seriously and offers the school a good level of challenge and support.

The school has worked hard to improve its links with outside agencies and also with parents and carers. The headteacher and staff are always on hand to meet parents and carers both before and after school each day. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements. The school has adopted recommended good practice across all areas of its work and this is reflected in the very good quality of its procedures and policies, and also in the systematic way in which the school monitors all aspects of safeguarding. The school site is inspected regularly to ensure it provides pupils with a safe environment. Safeguarding training for all staff and members of the governing body is ongoing and they are well aware of the importance of their role in protecting pupils.

The school’s work in promoting community cohesion is good. It has built up effective links with the local community and with several communities in other countries, including Europe and Africa, and uses these very well in order to develop pupils’ understanding of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider world. However, pupils’ understanding of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the United Kingdom is not quite as 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	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

Views of parents and carers

There was a below average rate of response to the parents’ and carers’ questionnaires. An overwhelming majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held positive views about

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the school. Few parents and carers expressed any concerns, although a very small minority felt the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils, and scrutinised behavioural records. The findings are in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marnel Community Junior 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 289 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	68	21	29	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	78	13	18	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	42	58	28	39	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	54	31	43	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	44	61	27	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	45	63	25	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	67	22	31	1	1	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)	37	51	33	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	43	60	28	39	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	49	31	43	3	4	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	49	35	49	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	63	26	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	49	68	21	29	2	3	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



19 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marnel Community Junior School, Basingstoke RG24 9PT

Thank you for welcoming myself and the other inspectors to your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and by how hard you work in lessons. You were all very friendly and polite, and we quickly realised why you like your school so much. We enjoyed talking to Year 6 pupils about their views of the school and how they felt it could improve. We agree with you when you say that you believe you attend a good school. Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You make good progress and achieve well.
- Your school takes good care of you and makes sure you are all safe and secure.
- You like lessons because your teachers try to make learning interesting.
- You enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of staying safe and having a healthy lifestyle.
- You are proud of your school and get on well with each other.
- Your headteacher, teachers and members of the governing body lead and manage the school well.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- make sure that the pupils who could be really good at English and mathematics are given work which they do not find too easy to complete
- help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from cultural backgrounds that are different from your own.

Thank you for making us feel really welcome. We hope you continue to enjoy school and work hard. All of you can help by making sure you come to school as often as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron
Lead Inspector

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