

Marus Bridge Primary School

Kelvin Grove, Marus Bridge, Wigan, Greater Manchester, WN3 6SP

Inspection dates 18-19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- It is vibrant, caring and highly valued by parents and the community.
- Pupils make a good start to their education in the highly creative Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Progress is at least good through Key Stage 1 and accelerates in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6 it is outstanding overall.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 is particularly high but it is not quite so high in writing.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety in lessons and around school is good. They have positive attitudes to learning.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving with some outstanding practice evident. Teachers and support staff have high expectations and are extremely well focused on promoting successful learning.
- Leaders, managers and governors provide outstanding leadership and management. This has resulted in significant and rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching, although good overall and occasionally outstanding, is not of a consistently high enough quality across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher. They also listened to pupils reading and scrutinised pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, checked on pupil progress and attainment and looked at documents relating to safeguarding and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own parental survey. They also considered responses to the questionnaire completed by staff.

Inspection team

Christopher Maloney, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Declan McCauley	Additional inspector
Terry Bond	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Marus Bridge is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average, as are those at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a number of changes to the teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate the few remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in order to make it of consistently high quality by:
 - ensuring all tasks are closely matched to pupils' needs and interests
 - increasing the pace of learning in a few lessons
 - improving classroom management skills so that learning time is not wasted
 - strengthening the use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 so they match those in reading by:
 - ensuring pupils' consistently good use of grammar and punctuation
 - using literature to enhance understanding of high quality writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make at least good progress from starting points on entry which are broadly in line with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. For instance, children made outstanding progress in their learning of phonics (the sounds which letters make) due to highly skilled teaching and learning about the body.
- Pupils are well prepared when they enter Year 1 and make at least good progress through Key Stage 1, reaching above average attainment overall by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The whole-school focus on developing a love of reading and regular reading sessions and daily phonics lessons has helped pupils make particularly rapid progress in this subject.
- Attainment has been rising in Key Stage 2, and in 2011 was significantly above average. Inspection evidence, including the provisional 2012 results show that progress overall is excellent and continues to accelerate through Key Stage 2. Overall achievement is outstanding because of the high proportion of pupils making and exceeding the expected progress compared to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics by the time pupils leave the school.
- However, the proportion reaching the highest levels in writing in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is not as large as in mathematics and as in reading in particular.
- The very positive climate for learning actively promotes success as in a Year 3-4 lesson where very practical teaching enabled pupils to understand about Judaism and the sharing of hopes and wishes for the future.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve exceptionally well due to the extremely well targeted programmes and wide range of skilled and successful interventions which meet their needs.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good and is improving rapidly. The change in staffing has led to some minor inconsistencies in quality emerging but overtime pupils make excellent progress and reach very high attainment. The vast majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good with an example of outstanding practice.
- The teaching of pupils who are eligible for the pupil-premium funding is very well targeted and highly effective. Furthermore, the teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very effective because all adults, particularly skilled teaching assistants, ensure pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and receive the focused support they need.
- The overwhelming majority of parents agree that their child is well taught and the inspection evidence strongly supports this view.
- Among the strengths of teaching are high expectations, good subject knowledge and the effective use of assessment, including pupils' self-assessment. Teachers also use teaching assistants very well to support those pupils with particular needs and build extremely positive relationships with pupils.
- The best lessons have a brisk pace and challenging activities that are carefully planned to meet the needs and interests of all pupils so that no learning time is wasted. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were fully engaged in response to skilled questioning and support for different ability levels in drafting and redrafting their horror stories to improve the quality of the writing.
- Improved use of assessment and marking mean that pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve their work further.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics is very effective in ensuring that pupils read and

calculate confidently and make outstanding progress by the end of Year 6.

- Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. However, ICT could be better utilised to support and extend learning.
- Although teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, a few minor inconsistencies in quality remain. These include always matching activities closely to the needs of all pupils and ensuring lessons consistently go at a brisk pace so that valuable learning time is not wasted.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous and get on well together. They have very positive attitudes to school and are keen and enthusiastic learners. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and respond well to the high expectations staff have of them.
- Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.
- The good care and welfare in the Early Years Foundation Stage contributes well to children's good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. They take turns, share equipment sensibly and play and learn together harmoniously.
- Inspection evidence clearly shows that behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that they very much enjoy school and that bad behaviour rarely spoils lessons. Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils clearly understood the different forms bullying might take but told inspectors that bullying does not happen in school, rather pupils sometimes argue or fall out with each other. Few parents disagree with this. Pupils expressed confidence that any problems they face are always dealt with effectively by staff.
- The school has very well-established reward systems, school rules and high quality relationships which support pupils' good and sometimes outstanding behaviour well. Pupils say they feel valued and that staff care for them.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents overwhelmingly agree. Pupils have a good awareness and understanding of how to stay safe. They benefit from good teaching about road safety, stranger danger and staying safe on the internet.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of responsibilities they can take in school, particularly the very effective playground buddies.
- The pupils' positive attitudes to school are summed up in a typical pupil view, 'Our school is friendly, healthy, welcoming to new pupils and learning is fun.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher. His vision, drive and relentless focus on improving achievement has galvanised the whole school community together with the senior leadership team and governors. This has led to rapid improvement since the last inspection.
- Staff know exactly what is expected of them and what the school is striving to achieve. They feel valued, supported and very much part of a team that shares the same vision for improvement in outcomes for pupils.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good and improving. Performance management is more rigorous and targeted at improving the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and professional development. This has resulted in improvements to staff skills, although more needs to be done to fully eradicate the few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that remain.
- Achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now outstanding. This is due to improvements in teaching, but also to greater rigour in reviewing the school's

performance and implementing precisely measurable actions to bring about improvement. Pupils' progress is closely monitored and evaluated so that they can achieve their full potential and have equal opportunities to succeed.

- The school has had a major focus on reading and seen rapid improvements in pupils' progress, especially at the higher levels, and is now trying to secure the same improvement in writing.
 - The excellent partnership with the local Learning Network of 15 primary schools and one special school provides high quality learning opportunities for pupils and staff.
 - The school works exceptionally well with parents, regularly seeks their views and keeps them informed about the work of the school and how they can help their child further through regular meetings, newsletters and the excellent school website.
 - Parents overwhelmingly agree that the school is well led and managed.
 - Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
 - The local authority has provided light touch support that has helped the school to improve since the last inspection.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - has greatly improved the rigour by which it supports and challenges the school to bring about improvement
 - works closely with senior leaders and staff to check on the quality of the school's work and the achievement of pupils so that plans can be drawn up to address areas for development
 - are well informed and benefit from links to individual teachers, subjects and classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher meet regularly with the School Improvement Committee
 - is fully involved in reviewing staff performance
 - has ensured that the pupil-premium funding has been accurately targeted so that pupils achieve their full potential.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106406
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	405033

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Gerrard
Headteacher	Mr Michael Gaskill
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2010
Telephone number	01942 248129
Fax number	01942 821588
Email address	enquiries@admin.marusbridge.wigan.sch.uk

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