

Marpool Primary School

Moorfield Road, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 3QW

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Rates of progress have improved rapidly since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers teach imaginative lessons which contain high challenge. Both pupils and parents and carers appreciate the quality of teaching.
- Pupils behave well and show a high degree of care for each other and for the school environment. Pupils feel very safe.
- Effective leaders and managers at all levels have caused rapid and sustained improvements. The experienced and knowledgeable governing body provides support and challenge in equal measure.
- The excellent leadership of the dynamic headteacher has a given clear vision to staff.
- Talented, caring teachers and other adults work as a dedicated team to create an environment in which pupils have the opportunity to thrive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in English and in mathematics is not yet consistently above national averages.
- The school does not work well enough with parents and carers to help them to understand how they can help their children to achieve challenging targets.
- Teachers' marking does not allow pupils sufficient opportunities to show where they have made the improvements asked of them.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 22 lessons and observed 16 teachers. Three of the lessons were joint observations with the headteacher or with other senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and to small group activities.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, representatives from the governing body and with leaders, teachers and learning support assistants. A number of meetings were held with the headteacher and the senior leadership team. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They also talked to 18 parents and carers during the inspection who, between them, had 35 children attending the school.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading and analysed work in pupils' books.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at documentation including the school development plan, records of pupils' progress, teacher observation records, information regarding attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and performance management.

Inspection team

Paul Garvey, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Lindsay Gabriel	Additional inspector
Alan Jones	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized school of its type.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, either at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school at other than the usual times is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- In 2012, the school exceeded the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club, together with on-site provision in 'The Hub' for any pupils who may require a more personalised curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment, in English and mathematics, so that it is consistently above national averages by:
 - helping parents and carers to understand how they can help their children to achieve challenging targets
 - encouraging pupils to respond to teachers' marking comments to show where they have improved in their next piece of work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The rate of progress of pupils in all years has accelerated since the last inspection. Progress is now quicker than expected for all groups of pupils. Pupils who join the school at other than the usual times are welcomed warmly. As a result, they progress as well as their classmates. A number of these pupils are 'fresh start' pupils from other schools who have previously made slow progress.
- Pupils who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium progress at least at the same rates as their peers and, in some cases, quicker. Thus, equal opportunities are being promoted well in the school. The school supplements the good teaching with a range of carefully targeted and effective interventions to support pupils who may be at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils join the school with skills that are often well below those expected for their age, especially in literacy. Nursery and Reception children are taught in a stimulating and caring environment where they make swift progress. The progress of some children, from very low levels of both personal development and literacy skills, is remarkable.
- Despite their good progress, most pupils leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment which is still below average. Progress in Key Stage 1 was slower than expected until recently. Since 2011, changes of staff have led to improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils in both Year 1 and Year 2 make rapid progress in all subjects. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are presented with a range of challenges to reinforce the good teaching of sounds and letters. This high level of challenge extends to teaching in Key Stage 1 where progress in reading has accelerated significantly.
- In Key Stage 2, achievement in mathematics was broadly average in 2012, but was below average in English. This lower attainment was a legacy of weaker teaching in previous years. Teaching is now much stronger and pupils are making quicker than expected progress in all years. This good progress is also apparent in pupils' work. For example, pupils' work in Year 6 shows that they are on course to reach at least the expected levels in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching was good or outstanding in almost every lesson observed. Pupils commented on how hard their teachers pushed them to achieve in class and these comments were echoed in discussions with parents and carers.
- This represents a sustained improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, which is evident in the school's own meticulous monitoring. This improved teaching has led to an acceleration in the rate of pupils' progress.
- Improvements in teaching have been brought about by two main factors. First, staff have received high-quality professional development, aided by the school's work in partnership with other local schools. Second, there has been very thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching over the last two years by senior leaders and by governors, who have not shied away from taking action where weak teaching was apparent.
- The school has developed an impressive on-site 'forest school' facility. Three classes were observed using this excellent curriculum resource outstandingly well to enhance their learning. For example, a group of Reception children with low level language skills benefited from strong support when designing a 'house for a mouse'. Careful use of language to raise self-esteem and excellent use of resources meant that all pupils responded with enthusiasm and were keen to try out their own ideas.
- Marking is consistent and directs pupils to ways in which they can improve their work. However, pupils are given few opportunities to show their teacher where they have made those

improvements in their next piece of work. Thus, the opportunity to establish a dialogue about the learning between teacher and pupil is often missed.

- Assessment is rigorous and is extremely well used by all staff to both set individual pupil targets and also to determine where extra support may be needed. However, although parents and carers feel that progress is being made by their children, they are often less skilled in supporting them at home.
- The school has used the pupil premium money wisely and the rate of progress of pupils supported by these additional funds is similar to that of their peers, and in some instances, more rapid. Class sizes, especially in Years 5 and 6, have been reduced. The number of support staff, who provide effective intervention support in both literacy and in mathematics, has been increased. In addition, 'The Hub' is proving successful in supporting pupils who require a more personalised curriculum. For example, a group of Year 3 girls, some eligible for the pupil premium, were learning to add two-digit numbers. A highly structured lesson allowed the girls to make good progress and encouraged them to collaborate to achieve success.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well. They show high levels of care for each other. This was seen in the well-managed breakfast and after-school clubs, where older pupils often helped younger ones with their snacks and in playing games. Pupils also take responsibility for managing the school gardens, supervising younger pupils at lunchtimes and operating the collection of paper waste from classrooms for recycling.
- Playtimes are boisterous, but pupils are well supervised. The end of playtime, signalled by a simple wave from supervisors, led to a stunning response from pupils, who were in their classes, ready to learn, in an impressively short time. This shows how well the school develops pupils' moral and social awareness.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and all parents and carers who expressed a view, either through the online questionnaire or in talking to inspectors, said that the school keeps pupils safe. Safeguarding procedures are robust.
- In just a few lessons, the teaching does not engage pupils throughout, so they begin to fidget and their attention drifts.
- Pupils were adamant that bullying of all kinds is almost absent and that any bullying incidents, or instances of poorer behaviour, are very well dealt with by adults. Pupils have a good knowledge of what is meant by cyber-bullying and say they have received a good understanding through information and communication technology lessons. Because equal opportunities are so well promoted, this leads to good relations being fostered between all groups of pupils.
- The school's work with families is good and has been boosted by the appointment of a parent support adviser. This has helped to improve the social and emotional aspects of some learners whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Persistent absence has fallen as a result, so that attendance has improved to be above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The inspirational headteacher has forged a highly capable leadership team. There are high expectations of leaders at all levels and leaders have the talent to bring about the improvements expected of them. The whole staff team shares the headteacher's clear vision for the school and the appointment of more effective teaching staff during the last two years has accelerated the pace of improvement.
- Careful identification of teachers' training needs, through effective performance management, has enabled teachers to improve their practice. Staff model professional standards well, resulting in a growing proportion of outstanding lessons being taught.

- The monitoring of teaching and learning is diligent and accurate. This is carried out regularly by all senior leaders and has produced a clear picture of where improvements may be needed. Teachers' performance management is then clearly linked to their classroom performance.
 - Leaders have effected rapid and sustained improvements in rates of progress across all years and in all subjects since the last inspection. This has been aided by ingenious curriculum development. Innovations, such as forest schools and enhancement days, like "Roman day", which culminated in over 50 pupils enacting a battle scene in the playground during the inspection, provide memorable experiences for pupils. Pupils say how much they have enjoyed a wide range of visits and extra-curricular activities.
 - Self-evaluation is accurate and results in detailed and well-targeted development planning. This leaves the school in an excellent position to improve further.
 - The school has developed strong relations with parents and carers. However, the school does not work closely enough with parents and carers to increase their knowledge of pupils' academic progress so they can help their children to achieve challenging targets.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body includes people with sufficient experience to offer both challenge and support. Members of the governing body gain a good appreciation of where strengths and weaknesses lie, through regular, personal contact with the school. For example, governors have accompanied senior leaders during lesson observations and have worked with the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching through judicious appointments of well-qualified and able staff. The governing body has discussed with the headteacher how the pupil premium money should be spent. The governing body also has a good awareness of performance management and why salary increments have been awarded. Rotation of the Chair of the Governing Body every two years allows the development of an experienced team who are supportive of each other. The creation of a forest school governor has aided the development of this area of the curriculum.
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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	113096
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	401451

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	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Mills
Headteacher	Rachel Pattison
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 December 2010
Telephone number	01395 263961
Fax number	01395 222342
Email address	admin@marpool.devon.sch.uk

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