

Marldon CofE (VA) Primary School

Marldon Cross Hill, Marldon, Paignton, TQ3 1PD

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- The attainment of pupils has declined over the past three years, particularly in mathematics. In 2012, attainment was below average in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Progress has been inconsistent across year groups. This has left too much ground for pupils to make up during Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching is inconsistent. Too much teaching requires improvement, and not enough is good or outstanding.
- Teachers do not always adapt their plans within lessons in response to how well pupils have been learning.
- There have not been enough opportunities for teachers to identify and share the best ways of teaching.
- The way work is planned for pupils means their skills and knowledge do not always build on their learning from previous years.
- Leaders across the school have not been effective in identifying and bringing about improvements, until recently.
- Changes that have been introduced have not always been consistently implemented and have taken too long to make a difference.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher has an accurate view about the performance of the school. Any inadequate teaching has been addressed and the amount of good teaching is improving.
- The rate of progress has improved for most pupils this year, particularly in reading. Some pupils are now making good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Marking of pupils' work is helpful and pupils regularly respond to the comments teachers make.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their learning.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do the tasks they are given. They have good knowledge about how to stay safe.
- Governors and the headteacher make sure that the appropriate checks and policies are in place to keep pupils safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by eight teachers, as well as sessions with small groups of pupils supported by teaching assistants. The headteacher participated in a few of these observations.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils have done over time in their books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils about their learning and their views about the school.
- The headteacher and executive headteacher met with inspectors to review the school’s recent data showing the progress and attainment of pupils currently in the school. They provided a broad range of documents about the performance and work of the school which inspectors evaluated, as well as policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector met with a group of governors.
- Inspectors considered the 78 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire about the school, Parent View, as well as other correspondence received and views gathered through informal discussions with parents and carers before and after school. Inspectors also considered questionnaires returned by staff at the school.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jeanne Simpson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school with a single class in each year group.
- Since the last inspection there have been several changes in leadership. The current headteacher has been in the post since April 2010. An executive headteacher from another school has recently been appointed to oversee the school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Other pupils represent a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. There are currently no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average overall. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is slightly below average, while the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding from the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority or children of services families.
- In 2012 the school did not meet the floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics set by the government.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching across the school so that it is consistently good or outstanding, by:
 - making sure that teachers closely check the progress pupils are making during lessons, and that they use this information to adapt their explanations and the tasks pupils are doing
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use their writing and numeracy skills across a wider range of situations
 - giving teachers more opportunities to identify and share with one another the very best ways of teaching particular aspects or skills.
- Increase the consistency of pupils' progress across the school, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - further increasing the level of challenge in the tasks set for pupils, especially for the most able, and making sure that these levels increase year on year, taking into account what pupils have done the previous year
 - involving pupils more in setting their own targets, evaluating how well they are working towards these, and then deciding on the next targets they need to aim for.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders across the school in taking responsibility for bringing about and sustaining improvements, by:
 - making sure that all leaders and teachers focus relentlessly on ensuring that teaching is at least good in all lessons
 - refining the systems for checking on the quality of teaching so that any areas that need to improve are followed up more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From good achievement in Reception, progress slows from the beginning of Key Stage 1. Observations of pupils' work during lessons, their work in their books and the school's records of their progress over time all show that progress is variable across classes. Until recently there was not enough emphasis on making sure pupils made the progress they should, every year.
- This year progress has improved and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made up the ground they lost earlier. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 now are well placed to reach standards which are at least average, and higher in reading. However, the more able pupils are not always challenged enough by the work they are given to do in lessons.
- While progress in mathematics has improved, this is at a slower rate than in reading and writing. Progress is still not quick enough to ensure that pupils achieve well from their starting points.
- Reading is a strength of the school. Pupils have a great love of reading; the library is very popular and pupils often read books that are advanced for their age.
- Children join the school in Reception with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age. The excellent resources, caring adults and good opportunities to learn mean they make rapid progress and become enthusiastic, effective learners.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported, and most of them make good progress. Some pupils with complex needs find learning particularly difficult, and they, too, are helped to make the progress they are capable of, considering the difficulties they face.
- Pupils who benefit from support through the pupil premium funding are helped to catch up with other pupils, particularly in reading. In 2012, eligible pupils in Year 6 were more than a year behind other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics. This year, eligible pupils in Year 6 are about six months behind other pupils, and catching up more quickly. However, eligible pupils in Year 5 have not benefited as much.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has been inconsistent. While inadequate teaching has been eliminated, too much teaching still requires improvement. The work pupils have done in their books and discussions about the progress pupils have made confirm that, despite recent improvements, inconsistencies remain and further improvement is required.
- While most lessons are well planned, and teachers set tasks which meet the needs of most pupils, there are too many occasions when teachers do not accurately evaluate the progress pupils make as the lesson proceeds. As a result, pupils too often work at a leisurely pace and do not make as much progress as they are capable of.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils, such as in the quality of writing they do when they are writing in lessons other than English lessons. Similarly opportunities outside of their mathematics lessons for pupils to use the full extent of their skills with numbers and calculations are limited. In contrast, during a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher quickly moved pupils onto working with coordinates in four quadrants, planning the king's defence of his castle. The interesting theme and challenging work meant pupils' progress was rapid. However, this high-quality teaching and development of pupils' learning do not happen frequently enough.
- The teachers set targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, and the pupils know what they should be learning, because each lesson has a clear purpose. However, pupils remain too dependent on the teachers to decide when they have reached their targets, or what their next target should be. This restricted involvement of pupils in reviewing and setting their targets limits progress, particularly for younger pupils.
- Teachers appreciate the training that has been arranged to help them improve what they do,

particularly around teaching the linking of letters and the sounds they make (phonics). For example, in a highly effective lesson, children in Reception helped each other to remember the new sounds they were learning and the teacher made sure that children sitting on the 'special spots' had additional opportunities to practise the sounds.

- Teaching assistants play a positive role in supporting the pupils who need help during lessons, as well as leading particular strategies that are used to help pupils with their learning. These adults make sure pupils do as much of the work as possible for themselves. Teachers make sure that teaching assistants know about the needs of particular pupils, and what the pupils should learn or be able to do during the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils like the work they are given, and say that they enjoy school. They like having targets to work towards, and know how well they are doing in their work. They increasingly respond to the useful comments teachers make in their books and this is helping them consolidate their progress.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite to adults and respectful of each other. They are aware of the different needs of pupils and willingly help each other.
- There is an agreed approach to deal with any incidents or disruptions and this means behaviour is managed consistently by all the adults in the school. The very few pupils whose behaviour can occasionally be challenging are helped to understand the consequences of this, and to make better choices.
- Pupils said that bullying, discrimination or racism are not tolerated. If there are any incidents or pupils fall out with one another, this is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils feel that there is always someone they can talk to if they are worried.
- Pupils have a good understanding the school's ethos. For example, they readily discussed why trust was important, in an assembly. They show great understanding of the lives of others, for example through serving lunches to members of the community, and through the links the school has with another school in Nepal.
- Older pupils take good care of younger pupils. For example, on a rainy day, Year 6 pupils helped younger pupils by playing board games and chatting to them.
- Pupils' attendance is average. The school makes clear to parents and carers the importance of being at school regularly.
- A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the behaviour of some pupils. Inspectors found that the school deals appropriately with incidents and that the particularly challenging behaviour of a very few pupils has improved because of the support they get.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leaders have taken too long to have an impact in improving teaching and learning because issues identified in lessons have not always been followed up robustly enough. Where improvements have been implemented, they have relied on external support to make sure they are sustained.
- There have been too many different ideas about what good teaching should include. Guidance about this has not always been clear and consistent because teachers who lead aspects of the school have not had enough training or opportunities to develop their leadership. This has begun to improve and leaders are working with teachers to identify the features of the best practice in the school and more widely.
- The curriculum has not taken enough account of the sequence in which pupils develop their skills, particularly in mathematics and writing. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to make decisions about aspects of the topics they study. A new approach to develop reading skills

has improved the standards in reading.

- Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the words summarising the ethos of the school, based on core Christian principles, and, along with opportunities to play music, take part in community projects and to help others in the school and more widely, this means that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well catered for.
 - The local authority has provided considerable support in helping the school to establish an accurate view about the performance of pupils, and to identify the issues which have led to the decline in standards.
 - Along with the support of another headteacher, the local authority's contribution has ensured that the school now has an accurate view of areas that need to be tackled. There is better use of information about how well pupils are doing to plan appropriate tasks, progress in reading has improved, and more teaching is now good and occasionally outstanding. This shows that, with the support of the executive headteacher, the school has the capacity to continue to improve.
 - A few parents and carers felt that communication from the school is not always clear or timely. Leaders are aware of this and have begun to address this so that parents and carers feel better informed about their child's progress or about any concerns that are raised with the school.
 - Together with senior leaders, governors make sure that appropriate steps are taken to keep pupils safe and that statutory requirements are met. They promote well the equality of opportunity for all pupils, ensure there is no discrimination, and evaluate how well the pupil premium funding is used.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have helped to make sure that the school understands and addresses the issues which have led to the decline in standards. However, use of this understanding of the achievement of pupils is recent, and the level of challenge they have brought to the school has not always been strong enough. They have welcomed the extra support through links with another school and are looking at ways of making the most of this. Together with the local authority and other advisors they have reviewed the governance of the school and made changes to improve their effectiveness. Governors make sure that the quality of teaching helps to inform decisions about the levels of teachers' pay and that decisions about how the finances of the school are used are carefully considered to get the best value for money.
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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	113465
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	403211

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicholas Glanfield
Headteacher	Marcus West
Executive headteacher	Martin Harding
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 March 2008
Telephone number	01803 557797
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