

Marsh Lane Primary School

School Road, Marsh Lane, Sheffield, S21 5RS

Inspection dates 8–9 April 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well across the school.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception, settle quickly and love learning.
- All groups of pupils make good progress, including those supported by additional government funding.
- Teaching is consistently strong in all classes with some outstanding elements.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and make learning fun so that pupils want to do their best.
- Pupils take a pride in their work and almost always take note of their teachers' advice in their books to improve their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The older pupils are excellent role models for the younger ones.
- Pupils say they feel completely safe at school, a view supported by all parents who expressed an opinion.
- The new headteacher has worked extremely effectively with staff and governors to drive improvement and build on the school's many existing strengths.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times the most-able pupils are not given sufficiently demanding work to do, especially in Year 2.
- Pupils are sometimes unable to fulfil their numerous targets in writing and mathematics effectively.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, all jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and, with the headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- A meeting was held with Year 6 pupils. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered the 44 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with several parents and carers.
- The inspector considered the 17 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- Reception children are taught with some Year 1 pupils in the former school house. The remaining Year 1 pupils are taught with Year 2 pupils. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are taught separately. Year 5 pupils are taught with Year 6 pupils.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very low. In this school the funding applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is very low. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors took up their roles in September 2013.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of the most-able pupils, especially in Year 2, by giving them demanding enough work to ensure they reach the higher levels of attainment in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that pupils have fully met their targets in writing and mathematics before giving them additional ones.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Reception with skills that are typical of those expected for their age. They make good progress because staff know the children very well and plan stimulating activities for them that capture their imaginations. They are well prepared for moving into Year 1.
- While progress is good in Key Stage 1, sometimes the most-able pupils are not given demanding enough work to do in Year 2 and this slows their progress. In 2013 standards by the end of Year 2 were above average but too few pupils reached the higher levels in reading and mathematics. Pupils achieved well in writing because this had been a focus of improvement for these pupils.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in Key Stage 2 because the quality of teaching is strong in every class. In 2013 progress was outstanding and standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach standards that are also well above average. In other year groups standards are above national expectations in reading and mathematics. They are not as strong in some year groups in writing. The school has introduced additional support for writing and looked at new approaches to motivating pupils to write so that progress accelerates.
- Pupils have a good understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and can sound out unfamiliar words. Their achievement was similar that of pupils in most schools in the Year 1 phonics check in 2013. Older pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read widely. They also read regularly at home.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. They receive good support from skilled teaching assistants who work very closely with teachers to make sure that pupils' individual needs are met.
- There were too few pupils supported by the pupil premium in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them. The additional funding is spent wisely on extra support for pupils' educational and social development. This enables these pupils to achieve well throughout the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently strong across the school with some outstanding elements. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and help make learning enjoyable. Teaching is imaginative with good questioning to assess pupils' understanding and to make them think harder.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and clearly convey to them what they need to achieve. Pupils are extremely keen to learn and are very willing to take on any challenge that is presented to them. They cooperate well and treat one another with respect.
- In Reception, staff make excellent use of both the inside and outdoor areas, benefiting from the facilities of the former school house and its spacious garden. Children are able to take part in numerous exciting activities relating to their topic which is currently 'dinosaurs'. For example, they had created a 'small world' resembling a primordial landscape of volcano and swamp, and

were enjoying filling it with dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes.

- Teachers are very good at showing pupils the kind of work they want, whether through writing or solving mathematical problems. This helps pupils to be clear about what they must do when working by themselves. They enjoy explaining their learning and reflecting on how well it is going.
- It is not only Reception children who benefit from the school's outdoor areas. For example, Year 4 pupils were chalking and measuring angles on the playground, and photographing angles in natural features, such as the right angle of the corner of a wall. In this class all pupils could distinguish between acute, obtuse and right angles because the teacher had explained the differences so well and planned activities that reinforced the key points.
- Books show that pupils take a pride in their work and present it neatly. The headteacher has introduced a new approach to marking that is proving successful in generating a dialogue about learning between teachers and pupils. Teachers clearly show pupils how to improve their work and pupils almost always act upon the advice they receive.
- The school is reviewing how it sets targets for pupils in English and mathematics as this is not yet consistent. In some cases pupils have too many things to aim for when they have not fully mastered the targets they have already.
- There is a good standard of work in all subjects, including topic and science. Pupils have opportunities to practise their English and mathematics skills in a range of different subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils very much enjoyed solving problems linked to their topic on the 'Titanic'. They liked working out how much change they would get from buying particular combinations of first, second and third class tickets.
- Teachers mainly set work at the right level for pupils, as they know them extremely well. On occasion the most-able pupils in Year 2 are not stretched enough to reach the higher levels of attainment in reading and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, to staff and to one another. They get on extremely well and support one another loyally. Potentially vulnerable pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are completely accepted by everyone and included in all activities. In this way the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles any discrimination.
- There is a real family atmosphere in the school, with older and younger pupils playing together and enjoying one another's company. The fact that all pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 go on residential visits each year, including to France, promotes their social skills extremely well. Parents are unanimously positive about pupils' behaviour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All pupils are supported exceptionally well and their individual needs are fully catered for. The school can point to examples of pupils who have joined part way through their education whose behaviour and attitudes have improved dramatically once they become part of the school community.
- Pupils say that bullying does not happen, but are very aware of different kinds of bullying such as cyber bullying and how to keep safe, such as when using the internet.

- The new headteacher has taken steps to make the school site completely safe and this has reassured parents and pupils. All members of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, spend the first fifteen minutes of each day out on the playground chatting with pupils and their parents, and making sure everybody is safe. This high level of approachability and care is much appreciated by parents.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility as members of the school council and have seen their roles develop this year from 'mainly making posters' to having a real say in the running of the school. Pupils have adopted the guinea pigs, Toffee and Fudge. They have chosen names for their classes that are suitably aspirational, such as 'Explorers' and 'Pioneers'. Pupils also take on the roles of play leaders and sports ambassadors to encourage their friends to participate more in games and sport.
- Attendance and punctuality are always well above average because pupils love coming to school so much.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has very rapidly won the support of the whole school community through her outstanding leadership. She has built upon the school's many existing strengths and brought in highly effective changes which are already having a positive impact on driving improvement.
- For example, a new system for tracking pupils' progress is enabling staff to see exactly how different groups of pupils are doing. This means that they can provide additional support straight away if anybody is in danger of falling behind.
- The new marking system has successfully helped pupils to improve their work and accelerate progress. Teaching has improved because staff are very open to new ideas and willing to adopt new approaches, which are engaging pupils more.
- The new headteacher has encouraged subject and other leaders to develop their roles and take more responsibility for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas. Staff welcome the increased opportunities to develop the leadership skills. This is having a marked impact in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in the leadership of support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The headteacher's thorough approach to every aspect of the school's work means that she has formed an extremely accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have identified that there is still work to do before leadership and management are outstanding. Not all groups of pupils excel yet and there are some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of pupils' targets for improving their performance in English and mathematics.
- The range of subjects and activities increasingly takes into account pupils' views and interests, and staff work hard to make them as exciting as possible for them. As part of their work on the Tudors pupils in Years 5 and 6 designed high quality illuminated mediaeval letters. A wide range of clubs, visits and visitors considerably enhance pupils' experiences and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.
- The primary school sport funding is being spent on a local schools' partnership. This promotes increased participation in sports, provides training for staff, and gives pupils opportunities to take part in different tournaments. This is already having a beneficial impact on their enjoyment

of sport and their health and well-being.

- The local authority has supported the new headteacher well as she has developed her role.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Changes in the leadership of the governing body have brought a new impetus which has resulted in governors becoming more active in seeking out first-hand evidence of the school's work. For example, they have undertaken walks around the school while it is in session to see pupils' learning, and have looked at selections of pupils' work. In this way governors have become more knowledgeable about how pupils are performing and the quality of teaching, and seen the impact of the pupil premium spending at close quarters. Governors take a keen interest in the targets that are set for the headteacher and members of staff to make sure that the school continues to improve. They ask searching questions to hold senior leaders to account. Governors are aware how salary progression is determined by the progress that pupils make. They ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	112544
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	431197

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	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cotterill
Headteacher	Fiona Marsh
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
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