

# Marlborough Junior School

Green Lane, Small Heath, Birmingham, B10 9NY

**Inspection dates** 3–4 December 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.
- Teaching varies in quality. It does not always help disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils is variable because the activities they are set are not always challenging enough.
- Teaching assistants do not always use their time as well as they could to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work because some teachers do not identify precisely what pupils need to do next.
- When checking the work of staff, senior leaders and teachers with subject responsibilities do not always provide staff with precise guidance. This is because they do not focus enough on the difference teachers are making to the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Senior leaders do not always respond quickly once weaknesses in teaching are identified, or make sure that once actions are agreed with staff they are consistently implemented in all classes.
- Governors do not check for themselves that school leaders are making a sufficient impact on the achievement of different groups of pupils. Therefore, they cannot rigorously check the difference all school leaders are making to pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- With support from staff and the governing body, the headteacher is taking appropriate action to improve the school.
- Teaching has improved, with some teaching successfully helping pupils to make good and better progress, especially in writing.
- Primary sport funding is used well to develop pupils' physical education skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of the religious beliefs of others.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they behave well.
- Staff work effectively to care for the pupils and this helps pupils to feel safe in school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons. They also briefly visited lessons to talk to pupils about their work and to review work in pupils’ books from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read during their reading sessions.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and teachers with responsibilities for subjects and specific aspects of the school’s work.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils. Inspectors also observed lunchtime and playtime activities.
- A number of documents were examined. They included the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body minutes, information about pupils’ achievement, and records relating to safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents and took account of the analysis of the school’s own questionnaire to parents. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, for these to be made available to inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of the 45 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Usha Devi, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Morag Kophamel

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Buckingham

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost three quarters of pupils are of Pakistani heritage, with the remainder from other minority ethnic groups.
- More than 80% of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is much higher than the national average. Very few are in the early stage of learning English.
- At 17%, the proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- Almost half of the pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium because they are known to be eligible for free school meals or are in care. This proportion is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An interim headteacher led the school from September to December 2013. The current headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2014.
- Since January 2014, five class teachers have left the school. Two new assistant headteachers and two new class teachers joined the school in September 2014.
- At the time of this inspection, the two teachers with responsibility for overseeing the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs were not in school due to ill health. An assistant headteacher is currently overseeing the provision for and achievement of this group of pupils on a temporary basis.
- In September 2014, the headteacher reorganised the roles and subject responsibilities of a number of senior leaders and teachers within the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all classes and raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
  - activities for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are closely matched to their specific learning needs
  - the most-able pupils are given activities that challenge and deepen their thinking
  - teaching assistants use their time during each part of the lesson to help pupils learn
  - teachers' marking tells pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by making sure that:
  - when checking the work of staff, all leaders focus on the difference teachers are making to the achievement of different groups of pupils
  - leaders take prompt action once weaknesses are identified, and ensure that all teachers consistently implement any agreed actions
  - governors check for themselves that the actions of all school leaders are making a sufficient impact on different groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection in June 2013, significant changes to the leadership of the school and changes in class teachers mean that some of the priorities identified at the last inspection have not been fully tackled.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking appropriate action to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. They acknowledge that there is still more to do to ensure that different groups of pupils make the same rates of progress.
- Other senior leaders and teachers with subject responsibilities are making the necessary changes. However, many are new to their roles and have not had enough time to have had a significant impact on teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders and teachers with subject responsibilities regularly check the work of staff. However, they do not focus enough on the impact of teaching on different groups of pupils. As a consequence, feedback to teachers is sometimes vague. Also, leaders do not always take prompt action once weaknesses are identified or make sure that all teachers consistently implement any agreed actions.
- Systems for managing the performance of staff have been strengthened. Teachers' targets for improvement are closely linked to pupils' progress and training is aimed at improving staff practice. Teachers and teaching assistants are currently involved in a whole-school programme for promoting effective learning. This is contributing to improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum covers a broad range of subjects. Themes and experiences are carefully selected in order to inspire boys and girls. Pupils in Year 4, for instance, were keen to talk about the 'Roman soldier' that visited the school and how much they enjoyed designing and making Roman shields and jewellery.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted effectively. Pupils learn to respect and appreciate religious differences, treat each other with respect and understand different points of view.
- The primary sports funding is used well. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of sporting activities. The physical education teacher is helping pupils to successfully learn new skills and is also providing teachers with high-quality training.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making better progress because the pupil premium is being used more effectively. Pupils are benefiting from additional support in smaller teaching groups.
- Most parents that spoke with inspectors are happy with the changes being introduced by senior leaders. While many are happy with communication between home and school, a few would like to see even more improvements with this aspect of the school's work. The headteacher is exploring strategies for further developing links with parents.
- Until recently, the local authority has provided light-touch support for the school. Since September, the school's local authority adviser has visited regularly and provided the headteacher with helpful support and guidance. This has helped the headteacher to tackle weaknesses in teaching. Links with local schools are developing well and helping the headteacher to re-evaluate the school's priorities for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are supportive and increasingly asking probing questions about the work of the school.
  - The governing body is well informed about the overall strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievement. However, governors are not routinely involved in checking that the actions of school leaders are making enough of a difference to the progress of different groups of pupils. Consequently, they are not fully aware of the impact of all senior leaders on pupils' achievement.

- The governing body is now keeping a closer overview of pupil premium expenditure. It is checking the impact of this money on eligible pupils' achievement.
- Members of the governing body have a secure understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching.
- Governors have worked with the headteacher to ensure that suitable systems are in place for managing the performance of staff. Together they have ensured that there is a clear link between pay progression and pupils' achievement.
- Prior to this inspection, the headteacher had arranged for the local authority to carry out an external review of the school's procedures in relation to keeping pupils' safe and to make sure that all checks in relation to staff were meticulously recorded. Inspectors found that the governors ensure that the current government requirements for safeguarding are met.
- The members of the governing body have arranged for an external review of governance so that they can further improve their effectiveness. This review will take place before the end of term.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous and polite to each other and adults.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work together well in pairs and small groups. Pupils are keen to learn and are supportive of each other during lessons.
- Pupils respond well to the school's approach to rewarding and encouraging appropriate behaviour. Pupils especially like to earn 'MPRIDE Credits' which represent the schools core values of 'Motivation, Perseverance, Respect, Inspiration, Determination and Equality'.
- Staff successfully prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. They discourage injustice by encouraging pupils to develop a strong sense of right or wrong and valuing the importance of a democratic process. Pupils spoke extremely positively about the application process they have to go through before taking on a responsibility in the school. They described the process as fair because it gave everyone an equal chance to succeed.
- Lunchtimes and playtimes are calm. Pupils of all ages use the different areas well. They enjoy taking part in organised games and using a range of play equipment.
- The vast majority of parents that spoke with inspectors and responded to the school's parental survey are positive about pupils' behaviour. Pupils have a secure understanding of different types of bullying and state that it is rare. A review of the school's record confirms that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and are dealt with effectively.
- Occasionally pupils become restless during lessons. This tends to happen when activities do not provide the right level of challenge.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training in relation to keeping pupils safe and that the suitability of visitors to the schools is carefully checked. Staff have received recent training in order to ensure they are alert to any potential risks associated with extremism.
- Pupils state that they feel safe in school. They understand the importance of reporting any concerns that they may have to an adult.
- Pupils know how to keep safe, including when using the internet and social media. Leaders are keen to broaden pupils' understanding of safety and to give them more responsibility for this aspect by giving them the chance to share their views on health and safety around the school and in the playground.
- Attendance remains in line with the national average for primary schools. The school is in the process of

extending its range of rewards in order to celebrate the attendance of pupils that have very little time off school.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but is not good or better across the school. This is leading to variable rates of progress.
- Teachers do not consistently plan activities that meet the specific learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Sometimes these pupils are set the same work as their classmates. This can mean they struggle with work that is too hard for them.
- Most-able pupils are not always provided with activities that challenge or deepen their thinking. Pupils told inspectors that occasionally their work is too easy.
- Sometimes teaching assistants do not have a focused role in all parts of the lesson. This means they are not always able to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work. However, they do not always tell pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Consequently, pupils are not always sure how to correct their errors.
- The presentation of pupils' work varies in quality but it is improving. In some classes, teachers insist on high-quality presentation and, as a result, pupils take pride in producing neat work.
- Writing activities effectively motivate boys and girls and encourage pupils to use punctuation and grammar correctly and to spell accurately. Opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learnt through longer pieces of writing are steadily increasing.
- The teaching of reading is better than in the past. Reading activities are increasingly well planned to ensure that there is a greater focus on helping pupils to develop a range of reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading and state that the new reading books are 'fun' and 'interesting'. They read with expression and use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) to confidently read unfamiliar words.
- Teaching has not always focused enough on developing pupils' mathematical skills. This has left a few gaps in pupils' understanding. The situation is improving and teachers are now helping pupils to learn a broad range of mathematical skills. Teachers are also starting to give pupils more chances to deepen and apply their mathematical thinking through complex problems.
- Where pupils make good and better progress, teachers use questions well to probe pupils' thinking. They also make suitable changes to the activities during the lesson so that pupils learn as much as possible. In one Year 5 mathematics lesson, for instance, the pupils were asked to complete a number sequence. The teacher provided additional support to the pupils who needed it and moved the pupils that were ready onto more challenging number sequences.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Teachers encourage pupils to ask each other questions and to work together well during group activities.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The results of the 2014 Year 6 national tests showed that, from their below-average starting points at the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils, including the disadvantaged and those from different cultural backgrounds made the progress expected of them in reading and mathematics. A few pupils, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, did not make enough progress in reading and mathematics. This was because of previous weaknesses in teaching.
- In 2014, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 declined in reading and mathematics from the

previous year and was significantly below the national average. In contrast, standards in writing were average because of the high emphasis placed on this by staff.

- Pupils in Year 6 made better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics in 2014 because senior leaders made writing a key priority for improvement. This resulted in a greater proportion of pupils than that seen nationally making better than expected progress in writing.
- Boys attained less well than girls in reading, writing and mathematics in the Year 6 national tests.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was similar to their classmates in 2014. Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 left the school with attainment that was almost a year behind pupils nationally in reading and over two terms behind in mathematics. By comparison, their attainment in writing was similar to pupils nationally.
- The proportion of most-able pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of Year 6 was below the national average in mathematics and reading. It was similar to the national average in writing.
- Pupils in all year groups, including disadvantaged pupils, are now making better progress in mathematics and reading. They are continuing to make at least expected progress in writing. The deputy headteacher has produced a helpful analysis which shows the achievement of different groups of pupils. This information indicates that there is still more to do to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- The gaps between different groups of pupils in the school and pupils nationally are closing. However, they are closing more quickly in some year groups than others because of variability in teaching. For instance, pupils currently in Year 6 are working close to the levels expected for their age. In contrast, the skills and knowledge of Year 4 pupils are below those expected for their age.
- Current progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. It is not improving as strongly as their peers because staff do not always make sure that the activities for these pupils are well matched to their specific learning needs. The teacher with temporary responsibility for overseeing the achievement of this group of pupils has suitable plans to help staff to better meet their learning needs.
- Most-able pupils make expected and sometimes better progress. They particularly enjoy completing activities that challenge their thinking. However, there is variability between classes in the extent to which the most-able pupils are set challenging work. This prevents the most-able pupils from making accelerated progress throughout the school.
- Actions taken to ensure activities engage boys and girls are having a beneficial impact. There are currently no significant differences between the progress made by boys and girls.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103312
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	452281

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Masaud Aslam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mohammed Sarwar
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12-13 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4647933
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