

Marlborough Primary School

Morice Square, Devonport, Plymouth, PL1 4NJ

Inspection dates 4–5 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She knows the school well and has correctly identified the areas for development. As a result the school is improving rapidly.
- Senior and middle leaders, and governors have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved, and is now good.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well from their very low starting points.
- Pupils are well behaved, polite and proud of their school. They are happy, keen to learn and demonstrate respect for the adults in school.
- Adults work hard to ensure that pupils are kept safe in school. As a result, pupils feel safe and parents are pleased with the recent improvements made to safety in school.
- There is an exciting range of subjects which meets the varying needs of pupils.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain because provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Adults in school work well together to provide a welcoming, caring and supportive atmosphere which enables pupils to learn effectively.
- Additional support given to pupils who need it is effective and ensures that they make good progress.
- Governors effectively hold leaders to account by questioning and challenging them. They also provide a good level of support.
- Children have a good start to their education in the early years. They make rapid progress because of the good quality teaching and support they receive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some classes, teachers do not always challenge the most able pupils who occasionally are given work that is too easy for them.
- On occasions, the feedback given to pupils does not encourage them to make effective use of the guidance to improve their work.
- In a small number of classes, additional adults are not always given clear direction by teachers to show them how they can support pupils in their learning.
- Some middle leaders are not yet improving the quality of teaching in the school because some are new to their role.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 19 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, examined work in their books, attended an assembly, visited the breakfast club and observed activities in the playground and dining hall.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors had a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school's plans for improvement and the report the headteacher regularly provides for governors. They also looked at documents showing how the quality of teaching is evaluated, the school's information on pupils' progress, and records relating to pupils' safety, behaviour and attendance.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire to be analysed. Inspectors considered 16 returns to a recent parental questionnaire produced by the school and spoke informally to parents to seek their views.
- The inspector considered the views of 33 staff who returned questionnaires.

Inspection team

Chris Chamberlain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Claire Fortey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Nearly three quarters of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals). This is much higher than the national average.
- One quarter of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This is above average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Reception children attend full time. Children in the Nursery attend part time for either the morning or afternoon session.
- In 2014, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2014.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club managed by the governing body.
- The school is part of a collaborative trust consisting of six local schools, known as the South West Plymouth Educational Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment still further by ensuring that all teachers, including in early years:
 - have high expectations and set challenging tasks for the most able pupils
 - ensure that the feedback given to pupils enables them to improve their work
 - give additional adults clear directions as to what support they need to give to improve pupils' progress.
- Ensure that all middle leaders have a clear understanding of their role so that they improve the progress pupils make.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by senior leaders, provides very good leadership for the school. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. Action plans are based securely on the needs that have been identified. The drive for rapid improvement has ensured that the quality of teaching has improved and pupils' progress has speeded up. There is very good capacity for continued school improvement.
- Middle leaders have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and speeding up pupils' progress. They organise training for the adults in school, undertake lesson observations and give colleagues advice about how they can improve their teaching. Middle leaders track pupils' progress and correctly identify aspects of the school that require further improvement. However, leadership and management are not yet outstanding as not all middle leaders are having a consistent impact on improving the quality of teaching to speed up pupils' progress.
- The school uses additional government funding successfully to speed up the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. The headteacher has ensured that the funding provides a wide range of innovative and effective approaches to support the widely varying needs of pupils in this school.
- The school works hard to promote equality and tackle discrimination through its work with local diversity and equality groups. Children take part in the Plymouth Respect Festival. The school's range of subjects enables pupils to empathise and reflect on the potential impact of discrimination. This ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain, and meets the diverse needs of the pupils.
- A wide variety of trips, visitors and events are organised by the school to ensure that the curriculum is stimulating and engaging. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is strong.
- Due to the school's very effective use of the primary sports premium pupils also have had more opportunities to experience a wider range of sporting opportunities including tag rugby, gymnastics and multi-sports. Pupils are excited by these opportunities and so their participation in sport has increased.
- The school works effectively to improve attendance. Robust systems are in place to check why pupils are late. Also, rewards are used to encourage high levels of pupils' attendance and support for families who are finding it difficult to get their children to school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current statutory requirements.
- The school is part of the South West Plymouth Educational Trust, a group of six local schools that work together to share resources, training and expertise. Recent collaborative work has focused on improving the curriculum and the sharing of pupils' work.
- The school has successfully developed positive relationships with parents by organising opportunities for parents to visit the school regularly. For example, they view their children's work and take part in school events such as sports days. Parents who spoke to the inspectors commented on how easy it is to speak to members of staff and how well the views of parents are listened to.
- Provision in the breakfast and after school club is good. 'It's a really fun hour', children told inspectors. The children are correct. Children are well occupied with board games and active sports skills sessions. Independence is developed as pupils are encouraged to wash up their own plates, bowls and spoons once they have finished their breakfast.
- The local authority provides proportionate support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support for school leaders. Governors are knowledgeable about the school because of the comprehensive reports they receive from the headteacher and because they visit the school regularly and find out for themselves how initiatives have improved teaching and speeded up pupils' progress. Governors understand how the quality of teaching has been improved across the school. They understand how targets for staff are linked to the areas that the school needs to improve further and how decisions about teachers' pay are linked to pupils' progress. They are suitably trained to be able to ask questions about pupils' progress data. This gives them the confidence to challenge senior leaders and ensure that the objectives set for the headteacher are based firmly on the main areas for further school improvement. Governors are very well informed about the school budget. They have evaluated the impact of additional government funding and ensure that disadvantaged pupils are well supported and make good progress. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are proud of their school.
- Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They are consistent in their approach to discipline and are also supportive and caring. Therefore, pupils behave well.
- Parents, pupils and staff agree that behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that there is no bullying or name-calling. They say that they would know what to do if they had a problem or were worried about something.
- Pupils are well focused in lessons. They are enthusiastic to learn and demonstrate respect for the adults in school. Staff have encouraged pupils to understand how to become a successful learner and develop important skills such cooperation, tolerance and independence.
- Records show that there have been no exclusions under the leadership of the current headteacher.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and as a result their attendance is improving.
- Pupils say that the playground is a fun place to be and they are right. Pupils enjoy themselves because there is plenty for them to do including cricket, football, skipping and using the adventure playground. Adults support playtimes effectively by playing alongside the pupils and acting as positive role models.
- Those pupils who do not always behave as well as they could are given support at breaks and lunchtimes. They are shown how to play with other pupils appropriately, so that they are cooperative and friendly.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because there are a small number of pupils who are not consistently challenged by activities in the classroom. When this occurs they then become restless and do not fully concentrate, and as a result, do not make as much progress as they should.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The school environment is secure. Parents are very pleased with the recent improvement to fencing around the school site. The school's most recent parental questionnaire shows that those who responded agreed that their children are safe in school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe because the school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding and skills in this area. For example, older children work with the Devon Assault Prevention Team. Pupils have an effective understanding of internet safety.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since her appointment the headteacher has acted swiftly to introduce a range of new approaches and strategies to improve the quality of teaching. For example, there are more opportunities for children to practise their speaking and writing in class. These strategies have improved pupils' participation in their learning, and as a result, their progress has speeded up.
- Where teaching is at its best, all adults in the classroom relentlessly focus on challenging pupils of all abilities. They make sure that pupils know what they have to do and ensure that time is used efficiently to maximise pupils' progress. However, in some classes the feedback pupils receive does not always help them understand how to improve their work.
- Questioning is used successfully by adults to extend and access pupils' thinking and understanding, which leads to high levels of participation.
- Teachers make learning fun. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 2 pupils were set the challenge of finding out how many biscuits weighed 100 grams as well as which combination of food products totalled one kilogram. Pupils were stimulated by this good level of challenge and were therefore keen to learn.
- Teachers also motivate pupils by planning exciting projects. They visit places of interest in their local area, they spend time away from home developing their independence and meet people who stimulate their interest in learning.
- Teachers regularly use the outside learning environment to motivate pupils. They learn additional skills outside and apply these to their learning in the classroom. Pupils return from the outside environment stimulated and very keen to work.

- Homework is used effectively to support the learning of all age groups. Activities build on the learning in school and so pupils make additional progress.
- Adults in school have established a positive climate for learning where pupils feel safe to ask questions and occasionally get things wrong because they know that they will be well supported and encouraged.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge well below those typical for their age. They achieve well and make good progress.
- Evidence from pupil tracking information, the learning observed in lessons and evidence in pupils' books show that pupils' progress is improving. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is improving rapidly and is now much closer to the national average.
- There were a small number of pupils in Year 6 in 2014 who did not make the progress that was expected of them. Some of those pupils whose achievement was not good enough were only at the school for a very short amount of time. Other pupils had specific additional needs which, without adult support, made it difficult for them to do well enough in the national tests.
- The large majority of pupils in the school are disadvantaged. The progress of these pupils is very similar to that of other pupils in the school and those nationally. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally in English and mathematics is narrowing. In 2014, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school in reading was five terms, in writing it was three terms and in mathematics it was three terms. Currently, the gap has narrowed to one term in writing and two terms in mathematics. There is currently no gap in reading.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. This is because of the effective support they receive to help them with their learning.
- The most able pupils make good progress in each year group. On occasions, however, some of these pupils are not given work that is hard enough for them, so their progress slows down.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils have well-developed skills for decoding complex words while older pupils can readily talk about their favourite authors and understand how to improve their reading skills.
- The teaching of phonics has improved and is now very effective. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2014 was above the national average. This proportion was far higher than that achieved in 2013.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge well below those typical for their age. Children make good progress and achieve well, and are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Children develop a high level of independence and are well motivated.
- The learning environment both inside and outdoors is inviting and very stimulating. Children thrive in this part of the school.
- Adults work hard to encourage high levels of attendance. For example, children in the Reception class are praised for being in school and encouraged to say to their partner: 'It's good to see you in school this morning'.
- Adults make sure that the children make rapid progress by skilfully questioning them to extend their understanding and also suggesting ways in which children can challenge themselves when working independently. For example, in the Reception class there are 'Cinderella Challenges'.
- Other adults who work with the children are well trained and highly effective. They skilfully extend children's learning through talk and modelling. Children are focused, keen to learn and enthusiastic.
- Teachers track the progress made by children and focus additional support where children have gaps in their understanding. However, the early year's provision is not yet outstanding because the evidence of children's progress kept by adults is not sufficiently detailed.
- Children's behaviour is very good because they are challenged, motivated to learn and well guided by the adults.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Adults work closely as a team combining their

knowledge about the children to ensure that planning for future learning activities closely matches children's needs and interests.

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	113306
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	453181

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allan Gavin
Headteacher	Rachel O’Kane
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 March 2011
Telephone number	01752567681
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