

Marlpool Junior School

Claramount Road, Heanor, DE75 7HS

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved rapidly since the last inspection and is now good.
- Pupils' progress has accelerated in reading, writing and mathematics, and overall standards are rising in these subjects, because teaching has improved significantly over the past two years.
- All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. No group of pupils underachieves.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are usually high.
- The marking of pupils' work almost always provides clear information on how to improve.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They are well mannered, respectful and sensible. They say they feel very safe in school and are well cared for.
- Leadership and management are good at all levels. Leaders are determined to raise teaching quality and pupils' achievement even higher.
- The governing body is well led by the committed and experienced chair. Governors are keen to help the school to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make as much progress, nor reach standards as high, in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- The school development plan does not describe with sufficient clarity or sharpness what actions are to be taken to secure further improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of nine lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- He looked at work in many pupils' books in several different subjects including English and mathematics. He listened to pupils from Year 3 reading.
- He spoke with teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders, governors, and a representative from the local authority. He held formal and informal meetings with pupils.
- The views of parents were gained from 30 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View), the school's recent survey of parents' views, and from several letters handed in at the office or sent by email.
- The views of staff were gained from meetings and from the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector looked at the school's records relating to: the safeguarding of pupils, their behaviour and their attendance; the progress made by past pupils and those currently in school; the school's improvement plan; the monitoring of teaching and learning; and governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Marpool Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has three mixed-age Year 3 and Year 4 classes, and three mixed-age Year 5 and Year 6 classes.
- The school shares its governing body with Marpool Infants School. The two schools are entirely separate institutions on different sites, but are linked in a soft federation.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average and rising.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school operates an internal Nurture Group.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, in order to continue to raise achievement and standards in writing, by ensuring that pupils are always given sufficient opportunities to write at length.
- Ensure that, when planning improvements, the school development plan states specifically what actions are to be undertaken, and what their intended impact is.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by her capable leadership team, has transformed the school culture into one where teachers have high expectations of every child, and a strong determination to do everything possible to remove barriers to learning. As a result, standards across the school rose sharply in 2014. Evidence clearly points towards this being sustained in 2015 in every year group.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is good. Subject leaders skilfully use the school's detailed tracking of pupils' progress to identify those pupils who need extra help. As a result, all pupils are making good progress, and the likelihood of any pupil falling through the net is much lower than it was previously. Teaching continues to improve because leaders give prompt verbal feedback to teachers on the strengths of learning they see across the school.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on what they have learned or to consider points of view different from their own. They share their thoughts openly and confidently in a safe and supportive environment. A wide range of additional activities, including sport, cultural visits and taking responsibility throughout the school via the school council or as play leaders, successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and help to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The good curriculum is encouraging pupils to use the skills they have learned in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of topical activities, often chosen by the children themselves. Intriguing research tasks, such as 'If water passes through sand, how come the oceans don't soak away?' are often set for homework. Pupils say they like trying to explain these conundrums.
- In response to national changes, the school is moving steadily and in a well-informed manner towards a different way of measuring pupils' progress over time.
- The school works very effectively to build and secure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are considerate and fair with each other. All pupils are aware of the universal right of equality. Consequently, there is no discrimination.
- Additional funding is used effectively to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils had all but disappeared at the end of Year 6 in 2014. Evidence seen in school indicates convincingly that this is now the case throughout the school.
- The school uses additional funding for primary physical education very well to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to participate in competitive sport, to provide additional sports coaching in school, and to offer increased opportunities for training teachers in teaching sport and physical education.
- The school's leaders have an accurate picture of what the school does well and what could be improved, but the school improvement plan does not specify which actions to take to secure improvement, nor what impact any actions are intended to have. Leaders do not always record their observations of the work of the school. This sometimes impedes their evaluation of how well improvements are going.
- The local authority has provided good support in helping the school to improve.
- The school meets all the current national safeguarding requirements effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. The governing body is well trained, well informed and committed to the improvement of the school. It receives clear information about the work of the school, and the progress pupils are making. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. Records show that they use their knowledge both to challenge and to support the headteacher about all aspects of the school's work.
 - Governors review spending decisions carefully. They ensure that additional funds are allocated to where

they are intended. This has, for example, had a good impact on the achievement of those pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium. Governors are rigorous in reviewing the performance of the headteacher, receive detailed information about the performance objectives set for teachers, and understand the link to salary progression.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The very large majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are interested and enthusiastic in classes. A very small number find it difficult to work on their own without supervision. Disruption to learning is rare.
- Pupils move around school purposefully and with consideration. They have good manners and are polite to each other, to adults and to visitors.
- All pupils are aware of the need to show respect to others. This is seen in the day-to-day life of the school. As a result, the ethos of the school is very inclusive, and pupils show full acceptance of each other's different strengths and weaknesses, or ideas and preferences.
- Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities in school. They value serving on the school council, acting as play leaders, and taking part in charitable fund raising activities. They particularly like having a voice in deciding what they are going to learn about.
- Attendance is rising steadily because pupils find the curriculum interesting.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Risk assessments are thorough, though they are not always easily accessible to adults. Teaching about risk-taking behaviours begins in Year 3 and continues into Year 6. Pupils have lessons, appropriate for their age, which teach them about risky or extreme behaviours. They understand the need for rules on safety when using the outdoor play areas, on the roads, and on residential visits. They learn about the dangers of drug abuse. They are taught and reminded often about the dangers of the internet.
- Safeguarding policies comply with local authority and government guidelines. Visitors to the school are carefully screened, and the school checks effectively on the suitability of persons who work in the school, or their associates.
- Pupils understand about different forms of bullying including cyber-bullying. They say name calling, including offensive, racist or homophobic language is very rare, because they know the school has a zero-tolerance policy. They know they can trust adults to act quickly if any form of bullying does happen and that it will be stopped quickly. This is one of the reasons they say they feel safe.
- The views of parents, pupils, staff and governors inform safeguarding policies and reviews. Staff and pupils are unanimous that they are safe in school, and governors agree. A small number of parents indicated otherwise.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well and work hard. They do.
- Teachers usually set different work for the different abilities within their classes. This ensures that pupils are challenged appropriately and stretched intellectually. Thus they learn well.
- Very good relationships exist throughout the school between pupils and adults. These provide solid

foundations for good learning. Mutual respect underpins conversations. Teachers trust pupils to work independently, and pupils routinely respond very well. Learning remains focused and progress is good.

- The pace of learning can be rapid, especially when teachers encourage pupils to think things through for themselves. This was seen to outstanding effect in a Nurture Group lesson, when pupils who typically find classroom work difficult sustained their concentration over an extended period of time. The variety of experiences in the lesson was remarkable. By posing 'What if...?' types of question, teachers and other adults encouraged these pupils: to work in harmony; to share resources; to be independent; to hold a discussion and listen to the views of others. Learning about British values of tolerance, respect for the views of others, the need for rules, and inclusivity was most impressive.
- Many teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of individual or groups of pupils. Sometimes it is difficult for a visitor to identify who is the teacher in the classroom because the activities of the adults during the practical phase of the lesson are so well organised. This level of focus ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported effectively to make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Equally, more able pupils never get the chance to 'take things easy' – extension tasks are always to hand.
- The marking of pupils' books is of a high quality. Pupils are consistently guided to consider a new perspective, rather than simply being told what to do next to get better. This provokes thoughtful responses from pupils, often several sentences long, which deepen their understanding of a topic.
- Some teachers do not always demand enough of pupils when writing about what they have just researched. Though note taking is well supported, the next step of undertaking an extended piece of writing for a specific purpose or to inform a specific audience is not always pressed forward.
- Older pupils say they are regularly encouraged and challenged to maintain high standards of presentation in different subjects. They say they know their 'targets for the week', but are not as sure about their end of Year 6 targets.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress has been accelerating steadily in reading, writing and mathematics since the last inspection.
- Pupils join the school in Year 3 from different infant schools with levels of attainment similar to the national average for pupils of their ages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils had made progress at a significantly faster rate than other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. They made average progress in writing. The school's reliable and accurate tracking information indicates that progress rates continue to improve. The work seen in pupils' books confirms this.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve well because they are skilfully supported by all adults in the school, including teachers. The very effective work of the Nurture Group is a significant factor in this.
- More able pupils achieve well because they are provided with challenging work which they rarely find easy. Some pupils reported that the teachers 'never give us a minute'.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils made progress at the same rate as other pupils in the school, and faster than all pupils nationally. Their attainment was a term in advance of other pupils in the school in writing, very similar in reading, and roughly a term behind other pupils in the school in mathematics. Their attainment overall was about a term ahead of other pupils nationally in reading, half a term in advance in writing and about a term behind in mathematics.

- In Year 6 in 2014 the proportion of pupils making expected progress and more than expected progress in both mathematics and reading was high. In writing, the proportions compared favourably with national averages.

- Pupils' mathematical skills are enhanced by having to solve intricate, word-based problems as a matter of routine from Year 3 onwards. Their reading skills are enhanced by comprehension tasks followed by discussions where other pupils' perceptions are shared to deepen understanding. Pupils do not always have enough opportunity to complete extended writing tasks based on their personal experiences. Their presentation of work is, however, consistently good.

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	112561
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	453849

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Acikgoz
Headteacher	Mary Hill
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2014
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