



Marlborough Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116143
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279759
Inspection dates 18 May 2006 to 19 May 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Sadler AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Redvers Buller Road
School category	Community		Aldershot
Age range of pupils	4 to 8		GU11 2HR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01252323910
Number on roll	94	Fax number	01252323910
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sue Brettell
Date of previous inspection	6 December 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Christine Bird

Age group 4 to 8	Inspection dates 18 May 2006 - 19 May 2006	Inspection number 279759
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Marlborough is a smaller than average sized infant school that includes Year 3 pupils. Almost all the pupils are from families that serve in the armed forces. About two thirds come from White British backgrounds and others are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is increasing. Currently about a quarter of the pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about twice the national average. Very high pupil mobility is experienced each term. In the spring of 2006, for example, 60% of the pupils left due to a regimental move. Only two of the current Year 3 pupils entered the school at the beginning of the Reception year.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the school's view that its overall effectiveness is good. The school has a number of outstanding features and provides good value for money. There is an outstandingly positive, caring and welcoming atmosphere that pervades the school. All the staff care and support the pupils exceptionally well and make the school a secure, safe and positive environment for all the pupils. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage, where they achieve well due to the good quality provision. Pupils continue to achieve well in all other year groups and they love their school and learning. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is invariably good. By the time that they leave the school at the end of Year 3, their good achievement is reflected in standards that are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics and science. All groups of pupils make good progress overall, though pupils' development in speaking and listening is satisfactory. Pupils make less progress than they should in this area because the teachers do not check and record their progress. This is particularly the case for the growing number of pupils that are at an early stage of English language acquisition.

Parents are unanimous in their support of the school with every parent saying that their children like school and that they make good progress due to good teaching. In addition, all parents said that the school takes good account of the pupils' views. One parent said, "the children are made to feel welcome and secure and I have seen how children blossom." Their personal development is outstanding, including their behaviour, spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. She has a clear vision for the school and strives hard to ensure that all stakeholders make a positive contribution to the school's success. She works in close partnership with the deputy head, and together they have developed the very strong teamwork which has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. There is significant capacity to improve further. Governors, too, play a positive role in the school's success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the assessment and recording processes for checking the pupils' progress in speaking and listening.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and pupils meet the challenging targets set for them in English and mathematics. Children start reception with standards that are below those found in most schools, particularly in their personal, social and emotional and their communication, language and literacy development. Children make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. This is due to the consistently good teaching and

the strong atmosphere for learning. This helps the pupils to become confident and secure in their learning. At the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress and, by the end of Year 3, standards in reading are above average. However, overall, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are more limited. The school is aware that better progress could be made, particularly for those pupils learning English as an additional language, if their achievements were more closely checked and suitable action taken. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and pupils who join the school after the Reception year make good progress as a result of the good provision that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are readily motivated by good teaching and relationships are excellent. Classrooms are happy places where pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. They enjoy working together in the good range of paired, small group and whole class activities prepared for them. Behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school, with older pupils setting a very good example by being part of the 'Good Manners Gang'.

School council elections help to give pupils an understanding of democracy. The work of the council ensures that pupils make a positive contribution to the success of the school. This is because staff involve them in making decisions about how the school is run. Most pupils are adopting healthy lifestyles. They enjoy healthy foods. As one pupil commented, 'they are tastyandhellip;.and good for you too'. Pupils show a good understanding of their own safety, for example in realizing the importance of rules when moving up and down the stairs.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are sensitive to things of beauty and to the feelings of others. Pupils act on a clear understanding of right and wrong, contribute positively to the school as a community and appreciate the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own. The school has good procedures in place to secure good attendance. However, attendance is average. This is almost entirely due to the high number of days that are taken as short holidays by almost all pupils when parents are posted overseas with very short notice.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and helps the pupils to learn well and make good progress in lessons. They enjoy learning and have very positive relationships with one another and all staff. They are eager to please their teachers and work hard. In most lessons learning activities are well matched to children's needs and good quality activities are set for them. Pupils who need extra help with learning are supported well, particularly by knowledgeable

teaching assistants who help them to achieve their targets. Probing questions and good use of attractive high quality resources stimulate the pupils' interest in learning. In a good Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher helped the pupils to gain a very good understanding of developing story plans using the interactive white board. This was then built on well with the pupils talking with their partners about the characters and setting in their plans to retell the story of "Pig in the Pond." Assessment activities are an important factor in the effective teaching and they are used very well to ensure that future work meets children's needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich range of good learning activities that are planned well to capture the pupils' interests. All statutory requirements are met and the school has adapted national guidelines very well to meet the needs of its pupils. The exception to this is planning for development of pupils' speaking and listening skills which is weak. Staff work closely together to create interesting and lively topics such as history work on the Second World War when the whole school worked together to study aspects of life during the war. This and other topics are successfully enlivened by making visits - on this occasion the whole school went to Winchester Military Museum. In addition a wide range of visitors come to the school to enrich and deepen learning, such as the Fire Service and an Astronomy Roadshow. Pupils enjoy a good range of extra curricular activities including the opportunity to learn French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Excellent attention is given to ensuring children are safe and well looked after at school. This contributes well to the pupils' good achievement. For example, the arrangements for ensuring safety at the start and end of the school day are exemplary. Procedures for ensuring child protection and risk assessment are securely in place and are regularly reviewed. Support and guidance for personal development are outstanding and children get along together exceptionally well. This is a particular challenge because almost all the pupils join the school other than at the normal entry date into the Reception class. The school is highly successful in helping pupils to feel secure, and there is a strong emphasis on teaching them to live healthily. Those with additional needs are very well supported, for example, through individual education plans and good quality teaching assistant support for those with English as an additional language. Arrangements for assessing how well pupils are doing academically are good though the school does not currently check pupils' progress in speaking and listening skills.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong and positive leadership. She has successfully developed an atmosphere that enables pupils to feel secure and to thrive. Many parents commented on the open and responsive manner in which she deals with any concerns. Above all, she has created a very strong sense of teamwork amongst all the staff so that there is a purposeful, inclusive and very positive atmosphere in which all views are valued. With able support from the deputy head and all teachers with responsibilities, there is a clear vision for the future of the school. This is shared by all staff and governors. There is good capacity for further improvement.

The school has good systems for checking how well it is doing. These ensure that it has an accurate grasp of improvements that may need to be made. Staff regularly seek and act on the views of parents through both informal discussion and questionnaires. The result is a good improvement plan that builds on the suggestions of pupils, staff, parents and governors. This effectively outlines priorities and how they will be tackled.

Governance is good. Governors are well organised, deeply committed to the school and its improvement and they have a clear understanding of the many strengths and also the areas for development within the school.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Children

I really enjoyed visiting you when I came to inspect your school. Thank you very much for the friendly way you welcomed me and for your help in finding out about the school.

Both you and your parents told us that you love coming to school and that you feel safe and well cared for. I am not surprised. Yours is a good school and everybody who works there tries very hard to help you to do well. Your teachers are good and work hard to make sure that lessons are made interesting and exciting. Mrs Bird has done an outstanding job in making sure that you can all work and play together in such a friendly way. I was very impressed with your behaviour which is excellent.

You work hard in lessons so that you learn lots of new things. Your teachers know that they can particularly help you to make your talking and listening skills better by noting down how well you are doing. You're really lucky to go to Marlborough Infants. It is a very friendly place where everybody wants the best for you. Thank you once again for being so helpful to me.

With very best wishes for your future,

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector