



New Marston Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123048
LEA Oxfordshire LEA
Inspection number 281390
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Schenk

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Copse Lane |
| School category | Community | | Headington |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Oxford OX3 0AY |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01865 761560 |
| Number on roll | 214 | Fax number | 01865 742944 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr N Paplomatas |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 March 2000 | Headteacher | Ms Z d'Archambaud |

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| 3 to 11 | 7 June 2006 - 8 June 2006 | 281390 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

New Marston School is an average size primary school with a Foundation Stage unit that includes 42 nursery aged pupils, who attend part-time. It serves a relatively deprived area of Oxford. The age range was extended to 11 in September 2003; prior to that it was a First School. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national figure. About a third of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is twice the national average. Nearly all of these pupils speak English as an additional language.

The Hearing Impairment Primary Base for Mid-Oxfordshire is housed in the school and staff from the base support seven pupils with hearing impairment who are on the roll of the school. As a result, the proportion of pupils in the school with a statement of special educational need is well above average, though the overall proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is only a little above the national figure.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school, which rightly judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good and they are well cared for, supported and guided. They are now generally making satisfactory progress in their learning and, although the standards that they reach are still below average, their achievement is satisfactory. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage where the teaching is consistently good. In the rest of the school the teaching is generally at least satisfactory, often good and sometimes outstanding. The curriculum satisfactorily covers all requirements, but links between subjects are not always strong enough to raise interest levels and motivate pupils. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school has accurately and honestly identified its strengths and weaknesses and has demonstrated its capacity to improve through the changes for the better that have taken place this year. Behaviour and attitudes have improved and so has the progress that pupils make, particularly in their writing. The school is well aware that further improvements in progress are needed and that the standards reached in reading are still too low and is working on these issues. Parents demonstrated their confidence in the school when the questionnaire sent out as part of the inspection met with a unanimously positive response.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading.
- Develop a more interesting programme of work in order to make better links between subjects and raise pupils' levels of motivation further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. When pupils first come to the school at the age of three or four, many do not have the skills usually expected of their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the consistently good teaching they receive, but nevertheless many of them do not meet all the early learning goals, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. The progress that they make in writing has improved considerably this year as a result of well planned initiatives and the specific support that has been given to teachers, both from within the school and from an external consultant. As a result, pupils are reaching standards in writing by the end of the key stage that are in line with the national average and this is a good achievement. However, as the school's assessments show, standards in reading and mathematics are still some way below the national figures.

Progress in Key Stage 2 is patchy. The progress made in Year 3 has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 are not making enough progress. In Years 5 and 6

nearly all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and many are making good progress enabling them to catch up. As a result, the standards this year in Year 6 are a considerable improvement on the results from 2005, which were not good enough. Nevertheless, standards in English remain weaker than those in mathematics and science, and throughout the school progress in reading is not good enough.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities generally make satisfactory progress, and hearing impaired pupils are helped to make progress because they receive effective support that is carefully tailored to their needs. The school keeps careful track of the progress made by the different minority ethnic groups and identifies and supports those pupils who are being held back because of gaps in their knowledge of English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school. As one Year 2 pupil said 'I love my school; I'd be so upset if I ever had to leave'. Attendance is average. The school has worked hard to improve behaviour and the impact is evident. Pupils move around the school quietly and with consideration, and behave well in classes. In assembly their behaviour is extremely good.

Pupils feel safe in the school and adopt safe practices. Prefects have been introduced this year, enabling Year 6 pupils to take responsibility and act as mentors to the younger children. The introduction of a new programme to support pupils' personal, social and emotional education has been effective in ensuring that they develop the skills they need. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies focus on developing children's moral awareness and personal skills.

The school takes account of the views of pupils. For example, they identified that they wanted to improve their healthy eating and the amount of exercise they take. As a result, pupils in the school understand the importance of a balanced diet and are praised for making healthy choices at lunch times. The extensive grounds and Foundation Stage outside area are used well to promote physical activities. The school has good links with the nearby secondary school to which most pupils transfer. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education and satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. In the rest of the school it is generally at least satisfactory, often good and sometimes outstanding. The headteacher and the deputy head are very good role-models: they demonstrate that they have outstandingly good teaching skills. Lessons proceed at an appropriate pace and include a variety of teaching styles. Particularly good use is made of paired discussion, to break up whole class sessions and to give all the pupils the opportunity

to articulate their thoughts. Teaching assistants are well briefed and make a valuable contribution in whole class parts of lessons as well as in group work, giving particular support to pupils with learning difficulties.

Staff from the Hearing Impairment Base work closely with staff from the school to plan programmes of work with a balance of integration and withdrawal that is appropriate for each individual pupil. Because class teachers make their planning available, the teachers in the base are able to prepare their pupils for units of work that are about to take place, making sure they understand the specialised vocabulary.

Marking in books is regular and encouraging. The marking of writing is particularly good: pupils are given clear and specific guidance on how to improve. Some suggestions for improvement are made in mathematics books in Years 5 and 6, but generally the good practice in the marking of writing now needs to be applied to other subjects. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own work and they know their targets in literacy and mathematics. The literacy targets are particularly helpfully displayed in the Year 3 books, and literacy and mathematics targets in Year 5 are written by the pupils themselves in the front of their books.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. National requirements are met. Considerable emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy, but time is found for the other subjects. However, the school needs to make stronger links between subjects so that better use can be made of interesting activities to motivate pupils and provide starting points for writing. The school has an information and communication technology (ICT) suite but it is under-used and there are at present no interactive whiteboards for use in the classrooms. There is a good range of activities available for the pupils after school, but demand is greater than supply and some pupils are disappointed not to be able to join in the clubs of their choice. Educational visits and visitors enhance the programme of work, but now need to be more carefully planned to become an integral part of the pupils' learning.

The school acknowledges that further development of the curriculum is needed in order to support cross-curricular links, increase the use of ICT and to enrich the experiences for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and the school has taken many initiatives to develop its caring ethos. One parent commented 'It is a small school where the individual child is known and valued'. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children are safe at school.

Procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils, including risk assessments, are in place. Child protection procedures are robust and all staff have recently received training. Pupils say that bullying is rare in the school and that, when it occurs, it is

dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils have confidence that their teachers will help them if they have a problem. As one pupil said: 'The teachers are happy to listen to you. They encourage you to come and talk to them'.

The school has recently introduced good systems for tracking pupil's academic progress and helping pupils to know how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a clear and accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has been a very effective leader in bringing about considerable improvement in a short time. She is well supported by the deputy head, who is also the literacy leader. There are good systems for analysing test results and monitoring and evaluating teaching, involving the head, the deputy, the numeracy leader and other staff. Through the monitoring and evaluation, the need for specific support has been identified. With the help of the local authority, teachers have been given well-targeted support that has been largely successful in improving pupils' progress in writing and numeracy. The school is aware that the teaching of reading is now in need of a similar approach.

The governors discharge their responsibilities satisfactorily and are actively seeking ways to develop their roles further. Individual governors are now linked with subject areas and have begun to take part in monitoring. They are also increasingly involved in the formulation of the school improvement plan, which is a well-focused working document that correctly identifies the key areas for improvement. One of these areas is the promotion of greater involvement by parents and governors. A good start has been made, but the school is aware that there is still more to be done.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 | 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? | 3 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | 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? | 3 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | 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 | 3 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | 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

Pupils

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour, your positive attitudes to learning and your hard work. You know how to be healthy and stay safe. We think you work and play together happily and that the prefects make a good contribution to the school community. We were pleased to see that you are now making better progress in your learning, especially in your writing.

We think you are well looked after by the school, and we know that your parents agree with us. We think it is very helpful to you that you know what your targets are in literacy and mathematics. The marking of your writing is particularly good because you are often told what you need to do next in order to get better. Before we left the school we met your headteacher, the deputy head and one of the governors. They are all keen to continue to find ways to make the school better. We specially asked them to think about two things. Many of you need to get better in reading and the school needs to plan ways to make sure this happens. You have quite a lot of interesting things to do, including learning from visitors to the school and making visits yourselves to places of interest. We want to encourage your teachers to make the work you do even more interesting and to use the links between subjects more fully so that, for example, you spend more time writing about things you have learned in history or geography.

We know that the school welcomes the support of your parents in helping you to learn. We think that, with your hard work, with your parents' help and involvement, and with the school always looking for ways to improve, the progress that you make in your learning should continue to get even better.

With best wishes

Christopher Schenk

Her Majesty's Inspector