



Martlesham Beacon Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124596
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281760
Inspection dates 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. John Messer LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Black Tiles Lane
School category	Community		IP12 4SS
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01473 624409
Number on roll	117	Fax number	-
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Susan White
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Alan Murray

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

There are five classes in this small primary school. Most pupils come from White British families. A small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small number speak languages other than English. A high proportion of pupils come from outside the immediate area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average but the proportion with statements of special educational need is above average. In some year groups the proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school during the year is above average. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its effectiveness as satisfactory and the inspector agrees. Children in the Reception class settle happily and make sound progress. Most are well on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and attain standards that are above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 and attain above average standards in English, average standards in science and standards that are below average in mathematics. Progress is more uneven in Years 3 to 6 because high staff turnover has had a negative impact on pupils' learning. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but in Years 3 to 6 not enough is expected of the faster learners in mathematics. Teachers do not receive enough guidance on how to improve the quality of their teaching. Pupils' personal development is good. They are keen to learn and eager to please. Staff, governors, pupils and parents agree that a key strength of the school is its small size and the family atmosphere. Behaviour is generally good. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but the school has been slow to develop systems to measure how much progress pupils make. It does collect a great deal of data on progress but it is not collated or used to set individual targets that show pupils how to reach the next stages in their learning. The headteacher provides sound leadership and has now set the school on a clear course designed to raise standards. The direction provided by the headteacher and governors, together with recent improvements in staffing, give the school good capacity to improve further. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a system that demonstrates clearly how much progress pupils make and use information on progress to set targets for pupils that shows them how to reach the next stages in their learning.
- Raise teachers' expectations of the standards that the faster learners in Years 3 to 6 are capable of attaining in mathematics.
- Improve teaching and learning by monitoring lessons more rigorously so that teachers have a clearer understanding of how to improve their practice.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils in the Reception year develop a sound basis for their future learning. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is broadly average. There is a strong emphasis on teaching the key skills associated with literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 and pupils make good progress. By Year 2 most attain standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress but within this overall picture there are significant variations and progress is uneven. This is mainly because of staff changes that have interrupted the continuity of pupils' learning and their rates

of progress. The results of national tests for pupils in Year 6 show that higher attaining pupils do relatively well in English and science and but do not make enough progress in mathematics. This is mainly because in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 there is insufficient challenge for the faster learners. There are examples of good work in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make satisfactory progress. The school identified that pupils taught in mixed age groups were not always receiving appropriately targeted activities and the progress of some groups was not as rapid as it should be. In response, teaching groups have recently been reorganised so that pupils are taught in year groups for literacy and numeracy. Teachers report that this is already helping to raise achievement. The school has not developed a system to set targets that help pupils to increase their rates of progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Behaviour is generally good but there are a small number of boys who occasionally present challenging behaviour and who interrupt the learning of others in the class. Pupils of all ages enjoy school and get on well with others. They feel that the small size of the school and the family atmosphere is a key strength. One pupil said, 'You make lots of friends and that makes you happy and if you are happy you learn better.' Pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. They take part in regular exercise and understand the need to eat a balanced diet. Activities such as selling healthy snacks at break time help them develop an understanding of buying and selling. They make a good contribution to the community. The school council, for example, provides pupils with good opportunities to air their views. They have raised concerns about the toilets and these are being addressed. Most pupils have a satisfactory grasp of basic literacy and numeracy skills which gives them a sound foundation for their future lives in the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. Within this overall picture there are important strengths as well as areas for improvement. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly good in English and pupils make very good progress. Across the school pupils are well motivated and enjoy their lessons. Interactive whiteboards are used well to demonstrate key skills, such as how to plot coordinates in all four quadrants. These computerised whiteboards are linked to teachers' laptops and have helped to bring lessons alive. However, teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not maintain high enough expectations of the faster learners in mathematics. Consequently the more able pupils do not make as much progress as they should. The continuity of pupils' learning has

been interrupted by staff changes and the long-term sickness of a senior member of staff.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is becoming increasingly relevant and more closely matched to pupils' needs. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills. ICT features strongly in the curriculum and pupils are becoming skilled at using computers, creating multimedia presentations and film making. Pupils report that there are lots of opportunities for games. As one said, 'We are a very sporty school.' Pupils participate in sporting fixtures, tournaments and swimming galas. They do well and swimming is a particular strength. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. A breakfast club and an after-school club are available on site. Exciting projects, such as one on farming which involved hatching chicks in classrooms and planting vegetables, provide pupils with potent learning opportunities. Good attention is paid to teaching pupils about healthy lifestyles and the need for regular exercise. They have a good understanding about the dangers associated with smoking and the misuse of drugs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school provides a safe and secure learning environment. Good attention is paid to child protection arrangements and the vetting of adults who work in the school. Governors and staff carry out rigorous risk assessments and there is good attention to health and safety requirements. Pupils say that they are confident that the adults will help them if they have a problem. They are full of praise and appreciation for the commitment of teachers and support staff. One pupil said, 'They're always there for you and that makes you feel good inside.' However, pupils are unclear about their targets and there is a lack of guidance about what they should do to reach the next stages in their learning. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Older pupils are particularly good at supporting the younger ones and those with disabilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, staffing difficulties have prevented the school from improving as rapidly as it would have wished. There have been three different headteachers since the last inspection. The school has had significant budgetary difficulties. The headteacher, with the expert help of the school bursar, has managed these difficulties well. The school is now on a sound financial footing but there is little room for manoeuvre. Resources are adequate to support teaching and learning. The quality of self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school analyses its performance and accurately identifies priorities for improvement. The good annual

improvement plan includes a strong focus on raising standards in key areas. There is a strong determination to improve provision and to raise standards. The school consults closely with parents. During the inspection, for example, the headteacher led a parents' meeting at which he presented the new staffing structure for next September and invited parents' views. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. Governors are well informed about all school issues and give good support. The governing body, ably led by the chair, has worked well with parents and the community to transform the school swimming pool from being a drain on school finances to being cost effective. The direction given by the headteacher and governors make a good contribution to the school's capacity to improve.

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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?	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	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

I enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for being so helpful and for telling me all about the school. I think that there are lots of good things about the school. I was intrigued by the good short films that you make. You read lots of books and your writing has improved. You are good at sports, especially swimming. You told me that you like the small size of the school because the family atmosphere helps to make you feel comfortable and secure. New children settle quickly into the school and I was impressed by the way the older ones help and support the younger ones. You are kind and thoughtful and you are sensitive to the needs of others. You enjoy your lessons and have sensible attitudes to learning. You are keen to do well and to succeed. I think that the small classes and the way you cooperate so well with each other help you to learn effectively. Most of you behave well but a small number of boys think it's clever to show off. Perhaps you could help them to be more sensible? The interactive whiteboards have made a big difference and support your learning well. I know that your headteacher and the staff are determined to make more improvements and to help you to reach even higher standards in your work. I think that there are three things that could improve standards further. I think that you should have clearer targets so that you know exactly what you have to do to reach the next stages in your learning. I think that some of the work in mathematics is sometimes a bit too easy, especially for the faster learners, and that you could actually manage work that stretches you more. I also think that the teachers could do with more advice about how to make lessons even more exciting. I wish you all every success in the future.