



Marner Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100912
Local Authority Tower Hamlets
Inspection number 285916
Inspection dates 23–24 January 2007
Reporting inspector Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Devas Street
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	4–11		E3 3LL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 7987 2938
Number on roll (school)	387	Fax number	020 7515 6802
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Helen Witty
		Headteacher	Ms Mary Todd
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Marner is a larger than average primary school. Nearly 90% of pupils come from a Bangladeshi heritage; about 98% of the pupil population speak English as an additional language and many pupils arrive at the school with little or no English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The number who join and leave the school other than at the normal starting points is high. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below what is normally expected with language skills being particularly low. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Marner is a good school providing good quality education for all pupils. Pupils achieve well and attain good standards in their personal development. Effective partnerships are developing with parents and the local community. Parents have positive views about the school and now play a greater part in their children's education.

Effective leadership and management are the key to the school's success. The relatively new headteacher provides strong leadership and clear educational direction. She receives good support from other leaders because their roles are well developed. Teamwork among the staff is strong and there is a commitment to making the school even better. Purposeful leadership has resulted in good improvements. Since the last inspection, the quality of provision and standards have steadily improved.

Stimulating and effective provision in the Foundation Stage means that children in the Nursery and Reception get off to a great start. They make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in language skills. Speaking and listening skills and early writing skills are developing well. Good teaching and a well planned curriculum enable pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Even pupils who are at the school for a short time make good gains in their learning. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well in a range of subjects. Teachers select interesting tasks which are well suited to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are well challenged and their interest is maintained. Standards in Year 6 are below average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. The school is aware that pupils in Years 3 to 6 make less progress in English than they do in mathematics and science and a range of well planned actions are being taken to tackle this.

Good care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. In this harmonious school community, all pupils are valued and thrive. Their needs are carefully assessed. Good guidance and support are provided for all pupils including those at an early stage of learning English, those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and the higher attainers. Pupils clearly enjoy school and this is shown by their enthusiastic participation in activities. Relationships within the school are good and pupils are courteous and friendly. Clear expectations and positive rewards lead to good behaviour. Pupils show a very good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the current actions to ensure that achievement and standards in English are at least in line with mathematics and science by Year 6.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Across the school, pupils achieve well. Good teaching, effective support and a relevant curriculum enable all pupils to make good progress. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress but, because of their low starting points, not all reach expected standards by the end of Reception. Four years ago, standards in Year 2 were well below average. These have now risen to below average in reading and average in mathematics and writing. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have consistently achieved well in mathematics and science. However, progress in English has been only satisfactory and girls have performed significantly better than the boys in this subject. Tackling these issues in order to raise achievement in English is the school's main priority. A range of appropriate measures are being taken including the use of intensive reading programmes and enlisting visiting male authors to motivate boys. Drama is being used well to spark pupils' creativity and imagination to aid their writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. They show consideration and respect for others. Clear expectations and positive relationships give rise to good behaviour. Conduct can occasionally be less positive when teaching is not sufficiently stimulating. Attendance is satisfactory. Attendance figures are below average, but the school works hard to promote good attendance. Pupils enjoy their time at school. As one Year 6 pupil commented, 'It's a mixture of fun and a good education here.' Through assemblies and different subjects, pupils have gained a very good understanding of healthy diets and the need for regular exercise. They readily take on additional responsibilities. For example, members of the school council represent fellow pupils well. Pupils contribute to the wider community by raising funds for well known charities. Pupils make good progress in acquiring numeracy skills and sound progress in literacy. These, combined with their ability to work with others, prepare them well for their future economic well being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, with some outstanding practice evident. In physical education, for example, teachers' enthusiasm, imagination and depth of knowledge inspire the pupils to high levels of performance. Across the school, teachers ask a lot of the pupils. Challenging activities capture their interest, consequently they work hard and learn quickly. Pupils know how well they are doing and what is necessary for them to progress further. In all subjects, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills. They ask searching questions which call for thoughtful

and extended replies. Pupils are encouraged to discuss new ideas together. In nearly all lessons, the work is organised so that pupils of different abilities face just the right degree of challenge and make good progress. Occasionally, lessons are not sufficiently stimulating and the pace of pupil learning declines. Pupils enjoy their lessons, but can sometimes express their enthusiasm too noisily.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A varied and well-planned curriculum is provided. It rightly gives high priority to developing competence in English and uses a very good range of programmes to ensure pupils of all abilities learn as well as they can. Mathematics and science programmes emphasise practical and investigative work, this helps pupils achieve well. The curriculum in the past has been less successful in promoting good achievement in English in Years 3 to 6. Areas needing improvement, such as boys' writing, have been identified and well focused action is being taken. Good links between subjects is making pupils' learning enjoyable and relevant. Pupils benefit from visits to places of educational interest, there is a good take-up for the club and activities provided. Visitors make a significant contribution to the curriculum especially in art, music and literature. A good Foundation Stage curriculum inspires the children and promotes good progress in all areas of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are effective procedures to help ensure that pupils are safe and secure. Pupils are responsible and adopt safe practices. Induction arrangements for children in the Nursery and new pupils in all other classes are good. These enable new arrivals to settle quickly. Staff in the Nursery and Reception provide effective guidance to help parents in supporting their children' learning. Provison for pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition is good. Specific learning programmes enable those with learning difficulties and disabilities to progress well. There are effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and this information is used well to plan the next stages of pupils' learning and to set suitably challenging targets for individuals. Systems to track pupils' progress have been introduced by the headteacher, but these are at an early stage of development. The lack of established tracking in the past has hindered the ability to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally good. It gives praise for good work and provides guidance to help them improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at all levels are successfully promoting good achievement and good personal development.

The headteacher has a good vision and brings valuable experience to the post. The new leadership structure effectively shares responsibilities and promotes good teamwork. Leaders are empowered to lead and innovate in order to enhance provision and raise pupils' achievement.

School self-evaluation is thorough and the school has a clear overview of its performance. Judgements about the school's key areas are modest but this is down to the high expectations of the headteacher. Findings from self-evaluation are used well to guide improvements. Leaders are aware that there is much to be done to improve standards and achievement in English. There are suitable action plans being implemented to raise achievement in reading and writing but some are too recent to have had a significant impact. Teaching is effectively monitored and developed by senior leaders. Good feedback and support are helping to ensure that shortcomings in practice are remedied.

Governors have been astute in the appointment of the headteacher. They are supportive and provide suitable challenge. Improved partnerships with parents have increased parents' interest in becoming governors. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. Steady improvements in provision and standards demonstrate a good capacity for further growth.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed the visit and would like to tell you what we found out.

Marner is a good school and one you can be proud of.

These are the strengths of your school:

- you thoroughly enjoy school and the activities provided
- the school is a pleasant place to be in
- children in Nursery and Reception get off to a great start
- teaching is good, which is why you make such good progress
- you are polite, friendly, and your behaviour is good
- the headteacher and senior staff run the school well
- you get on well with other pupils and adults
- staff know you well; they take good care of you and you receive good support from them
- your parents are pleased with the school.

There is one main area which could be improved:

- some of you could make more progress in English. Your teachers are already working hard to make this happen.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards,

Derek WattsLead Inspector