

Marine Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108675
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	288152
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Dave Byrne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jerry Graham
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Burden
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2001
School address	Hatfield Square Woodbine Estate South Shields Tyne and Wear NE33 2RD
Telephone number	0191 4554513
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The attainment of most pupils starting school in the Foundation Stage is well below what is typical for their age. The majority of pupils are of Bangladeshi origin and have English as an additional language (EAL). A third of all pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is almost three times the national average and twice as many pupils as found nationally have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are a small minority of looked-after children. A significant number of pupils start school at times other than normal, often as new arrivals from abroad. Out of school care is provided each morning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which makes a significant difference to the life chances of its pupils. Effective leadership and management, good teaching and high levels of care result in pupils achieving well in their time in school. A dedicated staff team, supported by a committed group of governors, has created an inclusive community that values not only its cultural diversity but also the individuality of each pupil. Parents are rightly proud of the school and value the part it plays in their own lives as well as that of their children.

Most children start school with standards that are much lower than is typical for their age, particularly in terms of their understanding of English. As a result of good teaching overall, pupils make good progress in catching up. By the time they leave school in Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Children learn particularly rapidly in the Foundation Stage as a result of very strong teaching and good provision, especially in outdoor learning. Although progress continues at Key Stage 1, its rate slows and pupils could improve at a faster rate if higher expectations were made of them. In Key Stage 2, learning accelerates and is good overall. Pupils with particular needs, for example in learning English or in overcoming learning difficulties, are very well integrated into school life and benefit from high quality teaching. As a result they do well. The progress of the more able pupils, however, is only satisfactory because they are not consistently challenged enough.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives because they develop good attitudes to learning, form positive relationships with others and develop sound basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). They know how to live healthy and safe lives, and willingly take responsibilities for many things in school. Through the school council, pupils make a democratic contribution to the school's development. Attendance has improved significantly in the last year and is currently satisfactory.

Good initiatives are underway to make lessons as relevant as possible to the pupils' lives. Local and international culture is celebrated and the school's involvement in the Creative Partnerships North and South Tyneside has released the creativity of staff and pupils. As a result, learning is fun. The school successfully enriches the curriculum with a wide range of educational visits and extra-curricular clubs. Pupils talk with pride about their River Tyne project and their partnership with their immediate community through events such as the Kite Flying day and their contribution to the design of the local park.

The headteacher provides very good leadership with a very clear vision for the school's development. Together with a strong management team, she keeps a close eye on the quality of the school's provision and takes effective steps to make improvements. As a result, pupils achieve well in their academic studies and personal development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress in Key Stage 1.
- Make better provision for more able pupils across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in their time in school. The large majority of children arrive at school in the Foundation Stage with a very limited knowledge and understanding of English. Most have a narrow knowledge and understanding of the world and limited hand-eye coordination. Good teaching in Nursery and Reception enables children to make good progress but by the start of Year 1 standards are still below those expected for their age. In Key Stage 1, progress is satisfactory because expectations of pupils are not always high enough. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been well below average in each of the last five years. There has been a slight improvement in results this year but standards remain below average this year.

In Key Stage 2, progress increases to a good rate. This year, the school's data shows that results in Year 6 are set to be restored to those of previous years, being broadly in line with the national average. This is after a fall in 2006 when results were below average, particularly in English. Realistic targets are set for pupils' performance in Year 6, but high levels of mobility into school mean that results do not always match predictions. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils who complete most of their education in the school make good progress and achieve well.

Across the school, looked-after children and pupils with EAL do particularly well, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets. The progress of the more able pupils, however, is only satisfactory and could be better if pupils were given more challenge. There are no consistent differences between the performances of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Their enjoyment of school is obvious as one walks around the school. They are confident and polite and they behave well at all times. They interact well in the playground where playground buddies help to ensure that everyone plays well together. The school's efforts to improve attendance have been very successful and it is currently close to the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and that of others. Aspects of the curriculum, such as opportunities to experience the environment and explore music and art develop good levels of spirituality. Pupils work well together in pairs and in groups, and develop crucial social and academic skills that will help them in the future. Their involvement in the school council is greatly valued by pupils because their views are respected. They make a good contribution to their community; for example, by raising funds for local charities. They talk proudly about their contributions to a new park including designing bricks for its walls. Pupils know the choices required to stay healthy, fit and safe. They benefit from the school's promotion of healthy eating and the good range of playground activities and sporting events available to them.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In consequence, pupils make good progress overall. A strong feature of teaching in the Foundation Stage is the exceptional teamwork between

teachers and support staff. All adults are involved in planning work so that each group of children receive well informed, high quality support. In Key Stages 1 and 2, lessons and tasks are usually well matched to individual needs, although the challenge for the more able is not consistently high enough. Pupils thrive on learning when it is linked to an educational visit. For example, in Key Stage 2, pupils worked with a variety of people to deepen their understanding of their locality by looking at the life of a salmon as it moves along the River Tyne. This extended their literacy, science, geography, history, music and drama skills, as well as their skills in ICT. In Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory but expectations are not always high enough. The introductions to lessons tend to go on for too long, which reduces the time pupils have to complete their tasks and activities. Assessment systems are generally good. They are used to identify and plan for the needs of pupils especially those who are underachieving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and promotes good academic and personal achievement. Strong leadership by the headteacher and senior staff is successfully remodelling subject planning to improve the relevance of lessons to pupils' lives. A very good start is provided for children in the Foundation Stage. Outdoor learning is extremely well used and all activities are carefully planned to effectively build up children's self-confidence and independence, and develop their knowledge and understanding of English. In Key Stages 1 and 2, recent improvements to the planning of writing are starting to bear fruit with better standards in Years 3 to 6. Creative partnerships make a positive difference to how pupils think and staff teach. As result, subjects are being more imaginatively planned to add excitement for learners. Pupils with EAL and learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well provided for but provision for the more able is not planned well enough. Throughout the school, standard lessons are enriched by close partnerships with the local community; for example, the local park, the library and visits from specialist staff. In addition, pupils have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides outstanding personal support for all pupils and good academic guidance. The health and safety of all children are paramount and all necessary child protection and safeguarding requirements are met. A good personal, social and health education programme effectively supports pupils' personal development. Dedicated staff, including those who are bilingual, successfully meet the needs of pupils with EAL and learning difficulties and/or disabilities although more able pupils would benefit from better support. Initiatives such as the pyramid club gives good support to vulnerable pupils including those in care. Any child who needs additional help is identified at an early stage and high quality support is provided so most achieve well. Parents are very positive about the care shown to their children and the many opportunities provided for them to be involved in their children's learning; for example, curriculum workshops in ICT. The school works closely with a range of medical and educational specialists to provide specific advice and resources whenever required. Children are increasingly involved in evaluating their own achievement and progress and use this knowledge to set useful targets to improve both academically and personally.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, supported by an effective deputy, has a clear vision for the school's educational direction. She has developed a strong team spirit amongst staff who respond well to her democratic management style. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, and of examination data, are thorough and systematic. They give a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and identify clear priorities for further development. This is evident in the recent focus on writing, which has helped to raise standards in English. Teaching and support staff are deployed well to make the most of their expertise. Their training needs are clearly identified and linked to school priorities. Finances are carefully planned and managed to get good value from the budget. The governors are supportive and are increasingly taking on the role of challenging the school. The school has maintained the strengths noted at the time of the last inspection and improved in some key areas; for example, in the outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage and in attendance across the school. In the current circumstances, the school has a good capacity to improve in future.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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.

Annex A

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	3
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	3
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

14 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marine Park Primary School, South Shields, NE33 2RD.

We are writing to you to thank you all for being so friendly and helpful during our visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you, listening to your opinions and joining you in lessons. As a result, we have been able to learn a lot about your school.

We agree with you that yours is a good school. It takes good care of you and gives you a good start to life. It does very well in helping those of you who need support with English and those who find learning hard. You achieve well because you have some good teachers and a very good headteacher who care very much about each of you. Standards are broadly average by Year 6, but could be better at Year 2. The children in the Nursery and Reception all get a great start to school life and do very well there.

You clearly enjoy school and seem to like joining in with all the extra activities on offer. You seem very enthusiastic about the way that school gives you a chance to join in with community events such as designing bricks for the local park and the way the school got involved in the kite project. Your behaviour is good most of the time, and the way you willingly take responsibility, for example as school councillors, lunchtime helpers and playground buddies, is commendable.

We have asked the school to help you make even quicker progress in Key Stage 1 and to make sure that the work is challenging enough for all of you. We hope that you can work with the school to bring about these improvements.

We wish you luck for your future.

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne and Gordon Potter

Your Inspectors