



Marsham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120831
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 291872
Inspection date 26 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ruth Frith

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Community		Marsham, Marsham
Age range of pupils	4-11		Norwich, Norfolk NR10 5AE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01263732364
Number on roll (school)	22	Fax number	01263735837
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Moira Stansfield
		Headteacher	Mrs Binks Neate-Evans
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

This is a very small, two class village school. Most of the pupils live locally and come from families representing a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion receiving free school meals is broadly average. Most, but not all, pupils enter school with attainment below national expectations and pre-school experiences vary greatly. Currently, one of the classes has a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. A higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary schooling. The school works in partnership with Hevingham Primary School which is located a couple of miles away. The schools share an acting headteacher who has been in post since the beginning of this academic year. Subject leadership, the development of the curriculum and staff training will all take place across the two schools, as does the work of governors. Pupils from both schools regularly come together for assemblies, clubs and other activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection agrees with the school's accurate evaluation of its own performance. Marsham Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection and a few aspects of the school are good. Whilst leadership and management are satisfactory overall, the recently appointed acting headteacher has brought a renewed focus to improving provision and raising standards. Her enthusiasm, commitment and clear vision are bringing about a quicker rate of school development. Staff and governors support her well. Priorities for improvement are accurate because the school has effective procedures to evaluate how well it is doing and what needs to be improved. Recent improvements have been made to teaching, planning the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and communication with parents. Although these measures have not been in place long enough to provide the desired effect, the school's capacity for further improvement is good. The governors support the school's development satisfactorily and have ensured that the school provides satisfactory value for money. The acting headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of parents who, in turn, are very positive about the school.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception but overall standards are still lower than expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Their attainment is restricted by the organisation of the curriculum, lack of resources and opportunities for work outside. Progress then improves so that pupils reach average to above average standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress slows in Key Stage 2 but is satisfactory overall. Year on year standards in Year 6 vary quite considerably and last year were below average in English, mathematics and science.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but teachers are not yet using fully the information they have about pupils' learning to plan activities which maintain their interest, develop their ability to work well unaided and make good progress. Pupils are sometimes unclear about how they can improve their work. Although they take part in some interesting activities, the curriculum does not always take into account the wide range of ages and abilities in each class so pupils' progress remains satisfactory overall and not good.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and usually attend regularly. They behave well and have good relationships with staff and each other. They feel well cared for because staff know them and their families well and provide effective pastoral support. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy and also care for others in school and the wider community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the curriculum, facilities and resources to extend learning opportunities for the younger children both in class and outside.

- Ensure that teachers use information about pupils' learning to plan lessons with challenge and pace so that Reception and Key Stage 2 pupils in particular improve their achievement.
- Improve the management and organisation of the curriculum so that pupils make good progress and develop independence.
- Ensure that pupils are clear about their targets and how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards vary from year to year because of the very small number of pupils in each year group, for example, there is only one pupil in the current Year 6. Also, a significant number of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education. Nevertheless, the overall picture is one of satisfactory progress. From frequently below average standards, the progress Reception children make in their personal and social development is generally good but in other areas of learning it is only satisfactory. The pace of progress then quickens so that by the end of Year 2, standards over the last two years have been slightly above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. In Key Stage 2, attainment over the last few years is mixed depending on pupils' prior attainment. In 2006, the school met its targets for English but not for mathematics. Standards were below average in English, mathematics and science. Different groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, generally make similar progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall but stronger in moral and social education. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. They enjoy being in this small school and make friends easily. Older pupils, in particular, support those younger than themselves through being 'buddies', and all pupils know how to deal with any unacceptable behaviour. They are also aware of how to keep themselves safe when walking and riding a bicycle. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and this knowledge is influencing what they do. They talk enthusiastically about their skipping, and they count the number of times they eat fruit and vegetables each day. Class councils are beginning to help pupils to share their opinions about the school and encourage them to contribute to its development but more could be done to involve them. They have some good ideas on how to improve the use of equipment during playtimes. Pupils are acquiring the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) as well as good social skills that will satisfactorily support them in their next stage of schooling and beyond. Attendance last term was broadly average and an improvement on the below average attendance last year. This is due, in part, to the introduction of a new system to check attendance and to better communication with parents.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers' planning is not yet effective in ensuring consistent good progress. For example, the tasks do not always engage pupils' attention for long enough or maintain a good pace of learning. When adults work with individuals and small groups, the pace of learning increases and is frequently good. Several pupils rely quite heavily on staff or other pupils for support and lack confidence when working alone. Although staff know their pupils well, they do not always use this information to plan work which fully challenges them and ensures good progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and create a good foundation for learning. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards effectively to maintain pupils' interest and develop learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Although staff have recently begun to develop the curriculum it remains only satisfactory because they have not yet found a way to ensure that it supports good progress, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. In Reception, facilities and resources are insufficient to encourage sustained work and play both inside and out. Also, as with the Key Stage 2 class, the organisation and management of activities encourages reliance on others. Staff are currently focusing on more theme-based activities to make learning more meaningful and encourage greater independence. Staff have developed the curriculum for literacy and numeracy with a focus on raising expectations and higher standards. Although these developments are well thought-out, the impact of this recent work has not yet been seen on standards. The personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' development and learning in areas such as ecology. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in school visits and the practical nature of these adds another positive dimension to their learning. Good work with Marsham's partner school ensures that pupils have access to a full physical education programme and opportunities to attend a range of out of school activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a secure and friendly environment in which pupils feel well cared for. The teachers' and teaching assistants' good knowledge of the pupils and their families makes an important contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school and their learning. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, child protection and health and safety are securely in place and vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and supported effectively. There are successful systems to monitor and reward good behaviour. The school has a new system for checking pupils' progress and identifying the next steps in learning. However, pupils are sometimes confused about their targets and how they could improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Although leadership and management of the school are only satisfactory overall, the leadership of the acting headteacher is good. Her enthusiastic approach has helped to develop a shared vision for school development amongst staff with a clear focus on developing teaching and learning, and improving pupils' progress. She has furthered the existing effective relationships with Marsham's partner school which are beginning to bring about improvements, for example, to the management of key subjects. Through effective monitoring of the school's performance and evaluation of what it needs to do next, clear action plans are in place, for example for literacy and numeracy. A new system for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets has recently been introduced but it is not yet being used to full effect. It does not yet consistently inform teachers' planning or improve pupils' progress. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a clear understanding of its strengths but they are not yet fully involved in school development and evaluation.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
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

29 January 2007

Dear Children,

Marsham Primary School, High Street, Marsham, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 5AE

Thank you for making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your work. I was pleased to hear that you enjoy school. I have written below some of the things I liked about Marsham School.

- You work well together and help each other with your learning.
- You know how to stay healthy by eating a good diet and having plenty of exercise.
- You behave well and look after each other through, for example, being buddies.
- You think school is fun because you do interesting things. You particularly like joining up with pupils from Hevingham School.
- Staff look after you well so you feel safe. I was pleased to hear that you would go to a member of staff if you had any problems.

I have spoken with Mrs Neate-Evans, the staff and governors, and we have agreed that you would do even better at school if teachers made the activities you do and the teaching better. You will then learn to do more work on your own. I am sure you can. I also think you should be given more help with understanding your targets. Also, the younger children need more things to help them learn both inside the class and outside.

I left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ms Ruth Frith

Lead Inspector