



Marton-cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121632
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292186
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Christine Inkster

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Reas Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Boroughbridge, York
Age range of pupils	4–11		North Yorkshire YO51 9QB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01423 322355
Number on roll (school)	68	Fax number	01423 325840
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr B Smyth
		Headteacher	Mrs Marie-Louise Thirlaway
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007	Inspection number 292186
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Marton-cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a small rural school in North Yorkshire. The school plays an important part in the local community, including the village church. The majority of pupils are from a White British background and the proportion entitled to free school meals is low in comparison with the national average, as is the percentage of pupils who have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, the SEN Quality Mark and has three DfES Achievement Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Marton-cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a good school with some outstanding features. The personal development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are articulate and are able to offer thoughtful and interesting comments during lessons. They participate very well in all school activities and appreciate what the school does for them. They show a very high level of care and concern for others and enjoy taking on responsibilities within the school. They play a very active part within the community, for example by contributing to fund raising events and local church fairs. They particularly enjoyed the opportunity to develop their enterprise skills by designing and running stalls for a Victorian fair.

Teaching and learning are good and some lessons are outstanding. Teamwork amongst staff and a strong commitment to ensure the best possible education for every child underpin the high quality of teaching. Good partnerships with other schools, and opportunities to share good practice, help staff to keep up-to-date with current practice and different ways of working. Although children are taught in mixed age groups with a wide range of ability in each class, work is differentiated appropriately to meet the individual needs of pupils. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school life. They make good progress, due to careful planning and the good quality of support given by experienced and skilled teaching assistants. Although procedures for assessing pupils' progress are in place, pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own achievement and understanding more precisely what they have to do to improve. The curriculum provided is of good quality and is enhanced by a variety of visits and visitors who offer specialist skills. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress due to good quality teaching and the wide range of practical activities which encourage them to learn effectively through play.

By the end of their time in school, pupils reach standards which are broadly in line with those achieved nationally, but in 2006 standards were higher than this. Although data about the school indicate that pupils make broadly satisfactory progress, evidence of pupils' work and the records kept by the school confirm that pupils make good progress. A tracking system has recently been introduced into the school but this is not yet sufficiently embedded to ensure more consistency in raising standards of achievement for pupils. The school regularly monitors all aspects of its work and has an accurate view of strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are very proactive and take their responsibilities in monitoring and evaluating the school very seriously. They work very effectively with the headteacher and staff to provide strategic direction for the school. The capacity for further improvement is good and the school provides good value for money.

The school maintains its good relationships with parents by having an 'open door' policy and sending regular newsletters. An overwhelming majority of parents are extremely positive about the school. The views of one parent echo the views of many: 'Marton School is a very special place. My shy, nervous child has now blossomed into a more confident, outgoing child with a real passion for learning.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop strategies to enable pupils to understand more precisely what they have to do to improve.
- Embed the tracking system throughout the school to ensure more consistency in raising standards of achievement for pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage varies, but is broadly typical of children of a similar age. Pupils make good progress, with most reaching and some exceeding the learning goals expected by the end of the Reception class. Standards in both key stages are variable when compared to national standards. However, as the school has very small cohorts of pupils it is important to consider the impact of this as well as the fact that there is some mobility of pupils. At Key Stage 1, results declined in 2004 and 2005, but the school has taken action to address the reasons for this; for example, in writing there has been a focus on improving sentence structure. As a consequence, results improved in 2006, when pupils reached standards which were higher than the national average in all subjects.

At Key Stage 2, in 2006, standards improved in all core subjects, but particularly in mathematics and science, in comparison with previous years. All pupils achieved the expected levels and three quarters of pupils reached the higher levels in all subjects. The school identified areas to be improved and the actions taken as a result are beginning to have an impact on raising standards. An example of this is the work done by the school on improving the quality of teaching and learning in science by introducing more investigative work. Although data about the school indicate that the progress made by pupils is broadly satisfactory, evidence of work in pupils' books and records kept by the school show that, by the end of their time in school, pupils make good progress with their learning, due to the good teaching they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is underpinned by the Christian ethos of the school. This is demonstrated by the exemplary way in which children show care and consideration for one another. Relationships are very positive within the school. Pupils extend their knowledge by learning about other faiths and cultures, for example, through their links with the church and correspondence with a school in France. The behaviour of pupils is very good and they are extremely polite and courteous. They are very keen to learn and they take great pride in their work. It is clear from discussions with pupils that they enjoy opportunities to take responsibility and learn independently. Pupils respond very well to rewards for excellent work and behaviour. Pupils demonstrate their awareness of healthy lifestyles by making healthy choices and there

is high participation in sports. The school council play an influential role in school life and the playground buddies are very effective in supporting younger pupils. Pupils take responsibility for fundraising activities within the community, for example, running stalls at the church fair. Attendance is good and this demonstrates that pupils enjoy coming to school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and some lessons are outstanding. Pupils learn well because relationships throughout the school are very good and the needs of each child are understood by the adults working in the school. Experienced and skilled classroom assistants work effectively in supporting the learning of individuals and groups. Staff are not complacent and seek ways of improving their own performance as shown in the improved quality of teaching and learning in science. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately, using the information well to plan suitable work for children of different ages and abilities. However, pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own learning so that they can understand exactly what they have to do to achieve further. A tracking system recently introduced into the school is beginning to be effective in providing monitoring data to check on pupils' progress and identify which pupils need extra help. However, this is not yet sufficiently embedded in order to have the maximum impact on raising standards. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage because adults work as a team and have a very secure understanding of how young children learn. The strong focus on practical activities enables children to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is of good quality. It is broad, balanced and relevant, and the provision for teaching basic skills is good. Effective links are beginning to be made between subjects but the school recognises that this will require further work to make learning more coherent for pupils. The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors, including artists and poets, and this engages and motivates pupils. This was demonstrated by the art workshops taking place during the period of the inspection, which focused on different aspects of multicultural art. The inclusion of specialist teaching in French and music provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their skills in these subjects. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided and in particular their annual residential visit. These activities are very well attended and have a significant impact on pupils' personal development. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is stimulating and well balanced, with a good emphasis on outdoor activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff are highly committed and provide good quality care and support for pupils. Good child protection, health and safety and safeguarding procedures are clearly understood by well trained staff. Risk assessments are fully in place for educational visits and the school is rigorous in ensuring these are appropriate for the particular type of activity. The school's system for tracking progress means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs identified early. They benefit from good support from additional staff and programmes which help to meet their particular needs. There are also good links with external agencies to support pupils. Relationships are good, pupils feel valued and know there is always an adult who will help them with any worries they might have. Pupils new to the school are enabled to settle well because of the good guidance and support offered.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges leadership and management to be good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and she is well supported by staff and governors. The headteacher and governors set a clear educational direction for the school, with an emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and academic development. The headteacher views the school with a critical eye and accurately identifies any areas which could be improved. Effective systems to monitor and evaluate the school's performance are in place and subject leaders set clear priorities to raise standards of achievement in their subjects. The staff work well together as a team to ensure that this small school offers as many opportunities as possible for pupils. There is a strong commitment and determination among staff to raise standards. Priority is given to the professional development of staff and is linked effectively to school improvement.

The governing body share the high aspirations of the headteacher and staff and are closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school. This process contributed to the effective self-evaluation of the school. The governors act as a 'critical friend' and hold the school to account. They ensure that their statutory duties are met.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in the areas identified. The capacity of the school to make further improvements is good and the school gives good value for money.

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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?	1
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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 your help when I visited your school on 10 and 11 January 2007. I particularly enjoyed talking to you about the work you were doing and what you thought about your school. Please pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and tell them I took all their views into account.

I thought you might like to know what I thought about your school.

- Your school is a good school and your behaviour and attitudes are excellent.
- You work hard and show care and consideration for each other. You also join in all school activities with great enthusiasm.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and some lessons are outstanding.
- Your teachers take good care of you and you are confident in asking them for help if you need it.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are making sure that the school runs well and continues to improve.

Your teachers work very hard and they want to make your school even better. I have asked your teachers to:

- keep even better checks on how well you are learning so that they can help you if you have any problems
- help you to understand more precisely what you have to do to improve.

Thank you for all your help and I wish you every success in the future. You should be very proud of yourselves and your school.