

# Marlborough First and Middle School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102186
<b>Local Authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	307922
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Maria Coles

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kevin Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Chris McDermott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Marlborough Hill Harrow HA1 1UJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8427 3087
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8427 0332

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<b>Age group</b>	4–12
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Marlborough is a larger than average first and middle school. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is three times higher than the national average. Nearly half the pupils speak English as an additional language with approximately a third of these at the early stages of English acquisition. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is high. The school has recently gained Primary Quality Mark, Artsmark Silver Award and Active Mark accreditations. The school has been through difficult times in the last three years with several changes of headteacher and high staff turnover.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Marlborough is a satisfactory and improving school. In a short time, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have brought stability to the school. Parents are supportive of the school and its leadership team. Many expressed views that the school has recently changed for the better. One said it has '...an air of stability'. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have built up a cohesive team through new management and teaching appointments. The leadership skills of many new post holders still need development although they have begun to make a difference in their areas of responsibility. For example, the recent improvement in literacy provision has improved the teaching of and achievement in reading in Years 1 and 2.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils clearly enjoy school, are confident and polite, and behave well in lessons and in the playground. Their positive attitudes to school mean that they work well in cooperation with each other and the adults who teach them. Pupils feel safe and happy as the school is now a more harmonious and positive place to learn. As one parent commented, 'The school seems to be a much happier, open place.' The many positive changes made in a short time show the school to be well placed to improve further.

Children start school with skills below those expected for their age. Standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school. Achievement is satisfactory overall, and is good in some year groups, but progress is inconsistent across the school. Not all pupils make the progress they should. In Years 1 and 2, progress was inadequate for some years, but is now satisfactory following recent changes. This is because pupils are learning their letters and sounds more systematically and regularly. Standards are above average in Year 7, and the achievement of this group is good. However, progress is inconsistent because the quality of teaching has varied from year to year due to staffing changes. The school's monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress has only recently been introduced and used to address these inconsistencies. The school is just beginning to set individual, class and year targets and to evaluate whether pupils make the progress they should against these criteria.

Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and outstanding teaching. However, this is not consistent. In better lessons, teaching shows an excellent understanding of pupils' needs and therefore meets them well. Consequently, pupils make greater progress in these lessons. Teaching and support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for those who speak little English, is satisfactory. Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of how to improve their learning as the school does not set and monitor individual learning targets. The school recognises that to improve standards further this is an area needing development.

Systems for safeguarding and promoting learners' health and social needs are well established. Academic guidance, although satisfactory, is variable. Teachers' marking is not always used consistently or rigorously enough to inform pupils of how well they have done in their work. There is insufficient guidance on what pupils need to do next to improve their learning.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

In 2007 assessments showed children at the end of the Foundation Stage were working in line with the nationally expected Early Learning Goals set for them. Currently children make satisfactory progress from their low starting points.

Strong links with families help the children settle in very well and engage readily in their work. The accommodation is used imaginatively to develop all aspects of the curriculum and children have good opportunities to develop physical skills. Teaching is satisfactory. A good feature is the organisation and support given to children whilst they are working on activities they have started for themselves. Good support is also given to children to develop their speaking skills. However, children's knowledge of sounds and letters and their writing skills are not developed consistently well.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make more consistent use of assessment procedures, including marking, tracking and analysis of data, to monitor progress.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that pupils' progress is better across the school.
- Develop the leadership and management roles of middle managers.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory, but varies from year to year and class to class. Pupils enter school with levels of attainment below those expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, the standards that pupils reach are below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. This represents satisfactory achievement overall, given their starting points. By the end of their time at the school, standards are usually broadly average although, for the current group, standards are above average. Progress accelerates as pupils become more proficient in English. Pupils who are lower attainers or have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. Pupils requiring specific help benefit from being supported individually or in small groups so that their progress is maintained.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils greatly enjoy school, attend well, and have good relationships with adults and each other. They are very welcoming and polite, and their behaviour is good. One parent commented, 'My son is really happy and loves coming to school'. Pupils respond well to their roles as class monitors and as members of the school council and take their roles seriously. One pupil remarked, 'We set a good example for others'. However, the opportunities for independence are only satisfactory. Pupils contribute to local community activities and raise funds for local and international charities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with pupils showing mature respect for the values and beliefs of others. Pupils feel safe and comfortable at school and well understand the need for healthy lifestyles.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. In the best lessons, teachers plan a varied range of learning experiences that excite and motivate pupils. For example, they use drama and resources that are visually strong and enhance the learning, particularly of pupils new to English. In these lessons, the learning support assistants are effectively deployed and make a positive impact on pupils' learning. While some lessons move at a good pace, and are well structured, others lack appropriate rigour. In these lessons, the tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. This means that the more able are not challenged enough and the less able lack appropriate support. This results in pupils being less productive in their work and not making the progress they should.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Provision for personal, social and health education is good and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. New frameworks for teaching literacy and numeracy have been introduced well, so that the range and coverage of these is consistent across the school. There is a more rigorous approach to the teaching of letters and sounds and this is helping standards to improve in reading and writing for Key Stage 1 pupils. A range of activities such as choir, dance and gymnastics enriches the curriculum and many pupils attend these clubs. From Year 3 onwards, pupils learn to speak French. Visits and visitors to the school add breadth to the curriculum and broaden pupils' understanding of the world. Cross-curricular links are not fully developed, so opportunities are sometimes missed to make learning more meaningful to pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Pastoral provision continues to be highly effective. This is summed up in a comment from a parent, 'My child is safe at Marlborough and looked after in an understanding way.' Effective procedures are in place to keep pupils free from risk or harm. The school works well with outside agencies from the local authority and the health services. Academic support is satisfactory but is inconsistent in its use. Teachers have started to track pupils' progress and are making increasingly effective use of the information but their marking does not always help pupils to know how to improve their work or what they need to aim for in order to make progress.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

The purposeful leadership of the new headteacher has put the school in a stronger position to move forward. The school's self-evaluation is sound and has an appropriate emphasis on staffing. This has involved many new initiatives for improvement, such as systems of support and training to improve teachers' knowledge and practices, and re-distribution of subject management responsibilities so that leadership roles are shared out amongst staff. They are at the early stages of taking up their responsibilities and have not yet started to monitor learning in order

to gain an understanding of how they can contribute to raising standards. There is a commitment and unity amongst the staff, driven by the leadership, for improvement, and this is beginning to be reflected in pupils' outcomes. The experienced governing body supports the school's work well and has been a stabilising force during a time of great instability.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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**

11 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marlborough First and Middle School, Harrow, HA1 1UJ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome during our recent visit. We were impressed with your behaviour, especially how well you listened in your lessons and worked together with your friends. We agree with many of your parents that the school is a happy and secure place for you to learn and play in.

We think that your school is satisfactory and is improving. Your headteacher and his staff have worked hard to make sure that the school is on the right road to do this.

We have asked them to try to make things even better by helping you to do as well as you can with your work. To do this they need use their assessments of your work to keep a careful check on how well you are all doing and help you to understand what you need to do next to improve. We would also like all the staff in the school to carry on developing their practice so that they can provide the best lessons they can for you.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Maria Coles

Lead Inspector