

Marlborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102494
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	308028
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Alan Taylor-Bennett HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	710
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jerry Folkson
Headteacher	Mr Gary Murrell
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Darcy Road via London Road Isleworth TW7 5XA
Telephone number	020 8560 3978
Fax number	020 8560 2185

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Marlborough Primary School is a large, popular and oversubscribed school. The wide range of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds of its pupils reflects the culturally rich and diverse community it serves in Isleworth. It has a Nursery, and there is a Special Needs Unit for children with Specific Learning Difficulties. A separately managed provision, called Marlborough Minders, provides extended care provision before and after school and in the school holidays.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Marlborough Primary School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. It is a happy school where children enjoy learning. The children's very positive attitudes enable them to work well with each other and with their teachers, and to make good progress. They are confident learners. For example, Year 6 pupils were observed in a lesson on rationing during and after the Second World War not only answering the teacher's questions imaginatively and with evident interest, but also raising perceptive questions of their own which they then discussed with each other. Behaviour in the school is outstanding and there is an atmosphere of trust and support. One pupil represented the views of many in saying, 'If you have a problem, the teachers are really nice and help you.'

This ethos is a consequence of the strong leadership the school has enjoyed for some years, and the current headteacher's clarity of vision and the way he communicates the school's values. He and his staff reinforce exemplary behaviour and good standards of work with praise, and manage the sometimes complex individual needs of pupils with care and skill. Teaching is good and there is a clear emphasis on supporting children's progress in all lessons, which leads to successful outcomes. However, too few of the most able pupils achieve the highest levels in national tests in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. The leadership and management team of the school responded effectively to issues raised in the previous inspection report and continue to show a good capacity to improve outcomes for pupils. Although assessment systems have been refined recently, they do not make enough use of National Curriculum measures of progression. Consequently, teachers' planning and marking do not indicate consistently and clearly enough how pupils may improve their performance. The school's accurate sense of its own strengths and development priorities means that it is aware of these issues, and it is taking appropriate action.

There is a very strong sense of community within the school. There are also some strong and effective links with other local schools and community groups, and these enrich pupils' experiences. It is in the early stages of reaching out and investigating how it can more effectively contribute to community cohesion locally.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Staff have created a rich and stimulating learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and a wide range of activities is provided for children. Welfare is given a high priority and, as a result, children feel very secure. They are confident learners and enjoy their first experiences of school life. Given their below-average starting points, children make good progress and they reach average standards by the end of Reception year. The progress of those who are learning English as an additional language is especially good. Children's reading and writing skills are less well developed than is usually the case when they join the school, but they make good progress with their literacy skills during their time in Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and those that children choose themselves. Early years practitioners are well trained and they effectively promote learning, when, for example, they encourage children to reflect on their play activities. Resource provision is outstanding, and materials and equipment are thoughtfully organised and easily accessible to children. The outdoor area is well developed and enhances the curriculum.

There are close partnerships with parents and external agencies and these ensure that the needs of all children, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are met. Children's personal, social and emotional skills are outstanding. They behave very well and have positive relationships with adults and other children. Assessments are rigorous but are not used consistently to plan next steps in children's learning. Because of this, more able children do not consistently receive work that is of an appropriate level of challenge. The interim arrangements to lead and manage the area ensure that good progress and good provision are being maintained.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continually monitor individual learners' standards in English, mathematics and science against the National Curriculum framework, so that teachers' planning and marking supports the progress of pupils.
- Increase the number of more-able students achieving Level 5 in writing and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well over their time at the school. They enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are slightly below those seen nationally and by the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average in many respects. This is because good progress is made during the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are attaining well above the standards reached normally by 11-year-olds, which means that the progress of older pupils is very good. All groups of pupils make equally good progress. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because of the help and encouragement they receive from their teachers and the good specialist support provided. One parent commented, 'My child has special needs and the school is doing wonders for him.' Science is a significant strength in the school. Pupils make consistently very good progress in this subject and reach a high standard by the end of Key Stage 2. The overall standard of pupils' work in mathematics at the end of Year 6 has been consistently above average over recent years and pupils' performance in English has improved significantly over this time. However, too few of the most-able pupils achieve a Level 5 standard of writing in English, and Level 5 in mathematics in the end of Key Stage 2 tests.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. They play amicably during break times and there are strong friendships between those from different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds. Pupils enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are characterised by mutual respect. Pupils know that they can talk to adults if they have any personal concerns. One pupil remarked, 'Teachers are our best friends and we can talk to them about everything.' Pupils love coming to school. However, attendance is only satisfactory because some families take holidays for longer than may be authorised during term times. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Assemblies are spiritually uplifting and give good moral guidance to pupils. Celebrations of festivals, Black History Month, and religious education, art and literature from other societies all help to enrich pupils' cultural development. Pupils say they feel very safe in the school and say, 'There is no bullying here at all.' Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and take

part enthusiastically in a range of sports through, for example, the Marlborough College initiative. They understand the importance of good nutrition and know how to choose healthy lunches. Pupils respond to the many opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as play leaders and monitors for various jobs, with energy and enthusiasm. They carry out their responsibilities with pride and are very good role models for younger pupils. The school council is influential and has brought about good and useful changes in the school. Pupils contribute to the wider community through raising funds for charities and showing their musical talents. Pupils' good skills in numeracy and literacy, and good links with local secondary schools through the Marlborough College programmes, prepare them well for their future education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching in the school is good. Classrooms and corridors are vibrant, interesting and stimulating places for pupils. This has a positive impact on their learning by stimulating their curiosity. Relationships are a very strong feature of lessons and, as a result, pupils explore their ideas confidently and feel happy to show their enthusiasm for their learning. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss their ideas during lessons and this has a positive impact on their language development. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils had in-depth and perceptive discussions about the differences between living in London and the Isle of Wight. Teachers explain lesson outcomes to pupils and, as a consequence, pupils understand what it is they are required to learn, and why. Interactive whiteboards and stimulating visual resources are used well to engage pupils, and teachers plan activities that involve pupils in practical learning. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils put dramatic actions to the words they had chosen to describe fire. Pupils with specific learning needs, including those learning English as an additional language, make good progress due to very good adult support. Although teachers plan work that caters for pupils with different abilities, more-able learners are not always sufficiently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has some highly effective features. Themes are used to link subjects and make learning meaningful for pupils. The Marlborough College initiative, in which Key Stage 2 pupils chose from a range of learning opportunities, is an outstanding aspect of the curriculum. Courses offered include 'Green Fingers', 'Yoga' and 'Computer Animation'. These, and other courses, are very popular with learners and support their development in a range of ways. The way that literacy is taught enables pupils to transfer their skills readily across different subject areas. It is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress that pupils make in their writing. For example, Year 1 pupils were seen writing at impressive length in their learning logs about an 'Adventure up the Beanstalk'. Pupils with specific needs, including those who speak English as an additional language, have appropriate resources which enable them to make good progress. The good range of after school clubs, such as boxercise, gymnastics and cheerleading, contribute outstandingly to pupils' personal development and their adoption of healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding. The school has established strong links with external agencies to help ensure pupils are cared for and supported extremely well. The local authority's special unit, which is housed within the school, provides good support to its pupils to fully integrate their care and education alongside their peers. Child protection procedures are securely in place. There is a high emphasis placed on personal development and, as a result, pupils relate extremely well to each other. There are effective systems for managing behaviour and for monitoring attendance. Systems to track pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection but are not yet fully developed. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is supported effectively and they are helped to make good progress. Marking is thorough, but teachers do not consistently make it clear to pupils what they need to do next to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a very clear vision for how the school will continue to improve, and he builds on its existing strengths with determination and passion. He and his senior team secure the commitment of all staff and enable them to work together imaginatively and effectively to an agreed set of priorities. For example, staff work in teams to develop specific aspects of the curriculum within the overall structure of the school development plan. The focus of the school's leadership over recent years has been developing pupils' enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of, their work. This has been successful and a very positive culture of learning has been established. Teaching is monitored rigorously by school leaders, and the steps that are taken to improve it are successful. Current assessment practice in the school does not always involve judgements of progress against National Curriculum levels. This means that there is not always consistency or clarity in the judgements teachers make about pupils' standards and progress. Governors are very well informed about the school and its strengths and development needs. They demonstrate a high level of commitment to contributing to the strong leadership of the school, and they use their skills and time effectively.

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Annex A

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
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marlborough Primary School, Isleworth, TW7 5XA

Thank you for making me and the other inspectors feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed being with you for these two days, getting to know your school, and being in some of your lessons. This letter is to let you know how well we think your school is doing.

You all wanted us to know that you think your school is good. We agree with you. We particularly liked the fact that you are so enthusiastic and happy in lessons. We found that the teachers are good at helping you to make good progress, right from the Nursery through to Year 6, by making lessons fun and interesting. We were also impressed by your excellent behaviour around the school, at play times and lunchtime.

Your headteacher and the staff are good at helping you to do your best. What is taught is good and useful and there are some exciting extra opportunities for you to enjoy, including the Marlborough College courses in Key Stage 2.

We can understand why you enjoy coming to school so much. We felt it was a pity that some of you take holidays in term time though, because you miss out on a lot of learning when you are away.

The headteacher and the staff all want to make Marlborough even better. They know how to do it and we believe that, with your help, it will happen. We have asked them to focus on the following.

- The teachers should assess your work accurately, so that the progress you make is more obvious. This will help your teachers to plan lessons better and to comment on your work more usefully.
- Many of you can achieve Level 5 in writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, and we want everyone who can do this to get there.

We wish you the very best of luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

Alan Taylor-Bennett

Her Majesty's Inspector