

Marjory Kinnon School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102554
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	308047
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Foster
Headteacher	Mr Alan Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Hatton Road Bedfont Feltham TW14 9QZ
Telephone number	0208 890 2032
Fax number	0208 893 7450

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Marjory Kinnon School is a large special school situated very close to Heathrow airport. The pupils present moderate and complex learning needs and an increasing proportion have difficulties associated with autism. Approximately one third of the pupils come from families who speak additional languages at home. In 2005 the school gained specialist school status for cognition and learning. The school also holds awards for Healthy Schools and Investors in People. The current headteacher has been in post for just over 18 months. There is currently no sixth-form provision although this is being re-established for the next academic year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Marjory Kinnon School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education and care. The school runs very smoothly on a daily basis, providing a purposeful learning environment where staff and pupils have good relationships with one another. The pupils are happy in school and parents and carers are pleased with the support that the staff give to their children and families. The pupils' personal skills, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. Their behaviour is particularly good, as is their contribution to the school and wider community.

The pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Senior staff recognise that, because the needs of the school population have become more complex in recent years, the curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning must change in order for the pupils to make more rapid progress. The school has already implemented some changes to the curriculum and training has taken place to improve lesson planning. The quality of the curriculum and teaching are satisfactory. There is still more work to be done to ensure that teaching is of a consistently high standard and that the curriculum meets the full range of pupils' learning needs.

The evaluation of the schools' provision enables senior staff to identify strengths and weaknesses accurately. This leads to appropriate action, but this is not followed through sufficiently to assess the difference that the changes have made to the pupils' learning. For example, findings from the monitoring of pupils' engagement and teachers' lesson planning have not been followed up, and planned changes to the science curriculum have not yet taken place. As a result, inconsistencies remain and the targets set are not sufficiently rigorous for leaders and managers to judge its effectiveness sharply enough. In general, monitoring activities are not systematic or regular enough and the roles and responsibilities of middle managers are not well developed. Consequently, senior staff and coordinators do not have a clear picture of the quality of teaching and learning for different subjects and for pupils of different ages and abilities.

Changes made since the last inspection have effectively increased the amount of teaching time during the school day and improved the quality of the music curriculum. The school has been designated as a specialist provider for learning and cognition since the last inspection, and uses this status well to focus on raising standards. Their work is well respected and appreciated by their partner schools. These developments suggest that the school has sufficient capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

As expected, according to their complex learning needs, children enter the school with skills that are well below those of a similar age nationally. Nevertheless, these youngest children settle quickly and make satisfactory progress in small but steady steps towards the early learning goals. The school acknowledges that the current timetable places limitations on the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Whilst all areas of learning are covered during the week, opportunities for the children to access these each day are insufficient. Appropriate plans are in place to extend the use of an outside play area to support the curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor the planned improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning more effectively so that all pupils achieve as well as they are able.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers bring a sharper focus to evaluating the effectiveness of the school.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is 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

The pupils make expected gains within P-levels and progress towards lower levels of the National Curriculum. However, pupils' progress is not consistent across the school. This is a result of identified weaknesses in the curriculum and recent problems recruiting staff. Older pupils leave school with some nationally recognised accreditations. However, the range of accredited courses is too limited and, as a result, the qualifications gained do not truly reflect the skills that pupils have acquired and are capable of achieving. Similarly, the targets set for pupils aspire to satisfactory rather than good development of learning and personal skills. Although they often reach the targets set for them, the pupils could attain higher standards if challenged more. The school's focus on speaking and listening, and information and communication technology, as part of its specialist status, has had a positive effect on raising pupils' skills in these particular areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils of all ages and abilities work and play well together. They enjoy one another's company, maintain good relationships and know how to keep themselves and others safe. The pupils are trusting of adults and confident that they will get the help they need to manage any difficulties as they arise. They are keen to learn and generally enjoy their education, but are not always as independent as they could be because they are offered too much help. Opportunities for the pupils to use communication strategies appropriately are too limited, with insufficient time to make choices and show how well they can do things by themselves. The school council meets regularly and takes its responsibilities very seriously. Through organising activities such as the recent Sports Relief day, it helps others in the school to think about the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. The council is also discussing with the deputy headteacher how merit awards could be given more fairly throughout the school. Some older pupils work towards independent travel and this prepares them well for when they go to college.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning. However, the quality is too varied with some unsatisfactory teaching as well as good teaching. In the best lessons, teachers' planning ensures that activities support pupils' individual targets. In this way, staff manage the wide range of ability within the class well. They

question well and, with appropriate prompts, help the pupils to contribute effectively without compromising independent responses. Support staff are not always deployed effectively. They are diligent in their attention to the care of pupils, ensuring that they stay on task. However, the same attention is not always sufficiently focused on what the pupils are actually learning. Too much use is made of worksheets, giving the pupils too few opportunities to record their work independently. Too often, the pupils passively colour, cut and stick, without exploring relevant vocabulary or applying what they can do in practical ways.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has recently carried out a thorough review of its provision to ensure that the curriculum more closely matches the needs of the pupils, particularly as these needs are becoming more complex. In addition, some groupings have been changed to provide a more cohesive ability range within classes. These changes have not been fully implemented in all classrooms or in all subjects. For example, in science the scheme of work does not reflect the needs of the secondary aged pupils. There is an extensive range of visits and visitors to the school that provide good support to raising pupils' self-esteem and awareness of the world outside school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Significant changes have been made to the school's systems for managing pupils' behaviour and developing their personal skills. There is a good training programme in place for staff to refine and develop their skills in this area. However, these changes have not been fully embedded within the classroom practice of all staff. There are inconsistencies in the way in which staff enable pupils to develop more independence in their learning. The assessment of what pupils achieve in lessons is not sufficiently systematic to give a clear picture of the progress made by individuals. Targets do not always help pupils to know what they must do to improve, and limits their involvement in assessing their own learning and personal skills. The school provides a quiet and calm environment in which pupils feel safe and secure. All statutory requirements are met and procedures for safeguarding pupils are sound.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, senior staff and governors is satisfactory. The school has made good use of its specialist status to develop systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its provision. These were further strengthened with the appointment of the headteacher, who quickly established an effective senior management team that has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses. In particular, this group has been proactive in linking rates of pupils' progress with developments required to the curriculum and teaching and learning. However, the planned changes have not been fully implemented by all staff and consequently, the school has not been able to set rigorous and robust criteria against which it can judge its effectiveness. Governors meet their statutory requirements, but are only just beginning to get the information they require to act as a critical friend to the school. The school has recognised the need to develop its middle managers so that they can play a more active role in monitoring their subjects and classroom practice. The school is now in a position from which it can move forward with some confidence.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	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.

Annex A

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 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

03 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marjory Kinnon School, Feltham, TW14 9QZ

Thank you for the help that you gave us when we came to inspect your school. Marjory Kinnon is a satisfactory school.

We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. The school council was especially helpful in telling us about the things that they like and the things that they want to change. We think that your behaviour is good and that you enjoy coming to school.

We think that the staff help you to learn lots of things as you get older but that you could learn even more in some lessons and subjects. The school must check that you are all doing as well as you possibly can.

Thank you

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty Inspector