

# Marlcliffe Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107000
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	309284
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	390
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Zoe Brownlie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sam Fearnough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Marlcliffe Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S6 4AJ

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	309284

**Telephone number**  
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school. Pupils come from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is average as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. More children leave or join the school during the school year than is usual. Pupils enter the Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the autumn and spring terms.

There is provision for before and after school care on the same site as the school, which is subject to a different inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good and rapidly improving school. Exciting developments in the learning experience for pupils have helped them to make better progress this year, which has resulted in improvements in standards. Building on an existing ethos of strong pupil care, it means that, as parents say, 'the confidence, aptitude and attitude to learning that they have at a young age is in part due to the teaching they receive and the encouragement and celebration of successes that take place', in the EYFS. This continues throughout school so that parents of older pupils say, 'our children enjoy school very much, feel happy and secure and are progressing very well'.

Effective action has been taken to ensure that target-setting is becoming more effective in enabling pupils to make good and improving progress. Teaching and learning are good because teachers offer fun lessons. These lessons engage pupils in a range of interesting independent and group work activities that are well matched to their abilities. They make it clear to pupils what they are to learn. In a small number of lessons pupils have fewer opportunities to be actively involved in their own learning. As a result, progress on these occasions is less pronounced. The curriculum is good because it is based on pupils' interests and is enhanced by an impressive range of activities and visits which promote learning and community cohesion. Increasingly, links are made between subjects, enabling pupils to practise and apply skills such as writing.

In 2007, pupils achieved satisfactorily to reach below average standards by the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence about the 2008 results and what is happening in the school at the moment demonstrate that achievement is now good because pupils are making quicker progress, especially in Years 5 and 6. Currently, standards are broadly in line with the nationally expected levels for pupils in Year 6.

Good care and support from a caring staff promote pupils' good personal development. Behaviour and attitudes are good because of the high profile given to rules for behaviour, which pupils know and follow. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They readily take on responsibilities, such as being school council members or playground helpers. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these qualities. Pupils develop effective life skills as they move through the school because of the varied and good quality experiences they receive.

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has established a leadership team which shares her clear vision of school improvement. Initiatives to improve the curriculum, teaching and learning and the quality of pupils' writing have had an impact on improving pupils' progress in their work. There is strong teamwork and the headteacher encourages all teachers and the team of teaching assistants to develop their leadership roles. There is a firm understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. While the majority of parents support the work of the school, a substantial minority would appreciate greater communication with the school. Inspectors agree that the way parents are involved in the school could be improved but also recognise the good work accomplished by the headteacher in forging good relationships between home and school. The highly effective action already taken shows that the school has a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with skills below national expectations. Imaginative teaching ensures that they make good progress because they are well looked after and enjoy the exciting activities planned for them. Children frequently visit local parks, go on picnics or visit the library. Exciting use is made of school facilities such as the 'Secret Garden' where children make very practical gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their exploration skills. Especially impressive is the way the children can explain what a prediction is and confidently discuss onomatopoeia. Exciting role-play activities enhances children's good personal development and well-being. Pedestrian safety is especially well promoted and children are very clear about the need for healthy eating and exercise. EYFS is well led and managed. Staff work and plan together well to consider ways to improve the provision, for example, by more age appropriate climbing and outdoor equipment and by making good use of extended community facilities. Regular assessments track children's progress and are used well to plan the next stage in their learning. The team has created positive links with the nine pre-school providers and formed a Mother and Toddler group to support new entrants' induction. Parents are very supportive of the way their children are cared for and encouraged to thrive.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by developing pupils as more independent and active learners.
- Improve parental involvement in the school so they can contribute more fully to the school's continuing improvement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are now broadly average in Year 6. Since pupils start school with skills which are below expectations, this means that their achievement is good. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average in the past three years. This represents good progress from their starting points in EYFS especially when the more limited time in school for January entrants is taken into account. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were below average. While this represented satisfactory progress overall from their starting points, pupils had not made sufficient progress in Key Stage 2. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that as a result of recent initiatives, standards in the 2008 tests for 11-year-olds were above average and pupils had made accelerated progress in Year 6. Progress across the school is now good, although there remain some areas of satisfactory progress where children are less actively involved in their learning. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make equally as good progress as their peers because rigorous assessment procedures and good support ensure that work is tailored to their needs.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are confident, and keen to come to school. The high level of attendance reflects their enjoyment of lessons and they are keen to tackle challenging tasks. They particularly enjoy Golden Assemblies and Golden Clubs which help promote their good behaviour. Good relationships have been established with staff and pupils know that their contribution is valued. Pupils know how to keep safe and say that they feel safe in school. They say that bullying is

rare and is quickly addressed by teachers. They know about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the exercise activities provided by the playground leaders. Many of the older pupils care for others in the playground and support younger children with their reading. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good and are promoted through such activities as meeting a visitor who talked about the plight of refugees in this country. They plan, organise, advertise and run fund-raising events such as the Leavers' Fair. This, along with their involvement in enterprise activities, improving basic skills and impressive use of ICT, has enabled them to develop important life skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lessons are well planned and have specific learning objectives so pupils are clear about what they are to do and learn. Work is carefully matched to the individual needs of pupils so that all pupils are fully stretched. The best lessons have a brisk pace, opportunities for paired work and chances for pupils to carry out practical tasks, which they thrive upon. Therefore, pupils work confidently and independently and cooperate well with each other; indeed, the frequent opportunities for speaking and listening enhance their learning. Teachers are skilful in questioning pupils to test their understanding and pupils' answers are valued and built upon. Teachers allow pupils time to reflect on what they need to do to improve their work and offer them opportunities to practise the necessary skills. Teaching assistants contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning, particularly any with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and use ICT well to generate interest and involvement. In some less successful, though nonetheless satisfactory lessons, pupils have fewer opportunities to be actively involved in their learning and their progress is less rapid.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong focus on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The introduction of strategies to develop pupils' writing and to incorporate more writing activities across all subjects is having an impact on raising standards in writing. The curriculum is relevant to pupils' own experience and local interests so that they learn about road safety and about the Sheffield floods of 1864. The themed days, which encourage pupils to understand about life in Africa and Asia contribute to their spiritual and cultural development and promote community cohesion. A strong emphasis on linking subjects together, albeit at an early stage, develops pupils' creativity in art, drama and music has had a strong impact on pupils' enjoyment and on raising standards. All pupils learn French and can study Spanish as an extra-curricular activity. There is a wide range of enrichment activities, which support pupils' learning such as visits to the city centre and to residential centres. Lunchtime and after-school clubs, including the school newspaper, sporting and creative activities, are enjoyed by many pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Robust procedures ensure that the care and support offered to pupils is good. There are strong relationships with outside agencies to ensure that the needs of all pupils are addressed. Parents are mostly supportive of the school's efforts in looking after their children. The provision for

pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for vulnerable children is good so that needs are quickly identified and addressed, and the impact of intervention measured. Strong procedures are also in place to support the needs of able, gifted and talented children. The safety of pupils is paramount and all safeguarding measures are in place. Strong links with local secondary schools and skilful transition procedures within the school, especially the way January entrants to school are helped to catch up in Year 1, prepare pupils well for the next phase of their education. Academic guidance is good. Teachers know pupils very well and pupils' progress is increasingly carefully tracked to help ensure that they make successful steps in their learning. Pupils have targets to help them learn and older pupils, in particular, know what level they are working at and what they have to do to reach the next level. The best marking tells pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work but it is inconsistently applied across school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The purposeful and focused leadership of the headteacher and the senior leadership team has skilfully led the school through a period of rapid change. This has created more vibrant teaching and learning, an increasingly exciting curriculum and improved standards. The school's self-evaluation is very clear so that there has been a concentration on clear priorities, which have been implemented through a thorough and detailed school improvement plan. A rigorous focus on data about pupils' progress and the setting of challenging targets has been central to raising standards. Leaders at all levels have been made accountable and they have relished the extra responsibility and challenge. Teachers have benefited from clear expectations about how children learn and have been enabled to improve the learning experience for pupils. Governance is good because governors recognised that improvements in standards were needed in school and they have supported the headteacher well to manage a period of difficult change. The majority of parents are pleased with the way children's progress has improved. The headteacher is attempting to involve parents more in the process of school development, but there is more work to do in this respect.



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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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. Marlcliffe Community Primary School is a good and improving school. The staff care for you very well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they want to make your lessons fun and arrange many exciting activities for you. They encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson.

We were pleased to see that you work hard and do your best. You come to school on time and care for one another in the playground. We think that your behaviour is good and you look after one another well. We found that you are very polite and helpful, and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you enjoyed coming to school because you enjoyed your lessons and because you liked your teachers. You said you appreciated the activities the school provides for you, like the clubs and sporting activities. Most of your parents and carers like the school very much, especially the way your teachers care for you and help you to enjoy your learning.

We have asked your teachers to do two things to make your school even better.

- Help you to do better in your tests when you are in Year 2 and Year 6 by encouraging you to become more independent in solving problems and finding things out for yourselves.
- Involve all of your parents and carers more in the development of the school so they can help to make it even better than it is.

You can help by always doing your best.