

Marlbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116684
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	312366
Inspection date	16 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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)	437
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	Martin Erwin
Headteacher	Tracey Kneale
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Green Croft Redhill Hereford HR2 7NT
Telephone number	01432 266643
Fax number	01432 272179

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- Progress in developing basic skills across the school, especially in writing.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school and the way in which pastoral support and curriculum enrichment enhance learning.
- The impact of leaders at all levels on school improvement.
- The effectiveness of the school's strategies to improve attendance.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this large urban primary school from the surrounding estates. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and two Reception classes. Extended provision for children from the school is provided through a breakfast club and the 'Marlbrook Kids Club'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils come to this large urban primary school from the surrounding estates. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and two Reception classes. Extended provision for children from the school is provided through a breakfast club and the 'Marlbrook Kids Club'.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

'My child's development in every area has been a delight to see.' This comment from a parent is typical of the very positive view that parents have of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children achieve extremely well in both the Nursery and Reception classes because teaching and the quality of care and welfare support are outstanding. Children start school with skills that are much lower than those found typically, especially in language and literacy and social development. They make excellent progress from these very low starting points and standards rise to just below average levels by the start of Year 1. Children do especially well in personal, social and emotional development because of the high expectations of all adults. Adults expect children to do their best at all times and there is a purposeful buzz in lessons as children go happily about their work. Reading skills also improve particularly quickly because all children read individually to an adult each day. There is an excellent curriculum that makes learning exciting and purposeful. Adults make extremely good use of the outdoor areas to support work in all of the areas of learning. Leadership of provision is excellent. Children's progress in the Nursery and Reception classes is carefully checked so that additional support can be given where it is needed. Members of staff work together very closely and continue to strive to improve provision, even though it is already exemplary in the way that it meets children's differing needs. For example, they are planning to develop a 'forest school' so that the use of the outdoor areas can be strengthened even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the use of writing skills in the different areas of the curriculum so that the gap between standards in reading and writing is reduced.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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	2
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	2
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
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?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

Dear Children

Inspection of Marlbrook Primary School, Hereford HR2 7NT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you. We agree with you that your school is excellent, and that staff do a lot to help you.

Some of the things we found out about your school.

- You are supported very well and excellent teaching helps you to learn new things very quickly throughout the school.
- Younger children get a super start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where you work together well and settle quickly. The outdoor areas are brilliant for letting you try out new things.
- You really enjoy school because adults make learning exciting by planning many fun activities both in and out of lessons. The bike maintenance class looked very interesting.
- Nearly all of you behave very well and take responsibility very sensibly. We are very pleased that you take such good care of the school building.
- The school council does a good job of representing your views.
- Your teachers and other adults are very kind and caring and they give you high quality support when you are struggling with your work.
- The school is very well led and managed and all the adults are working very hard to make the school even better.
- Almost all of your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school. What we have asked your school to do now.
- Give you more opportunities to practise and improve your writing skills when working in different subjects so that you do as well in writing as you do in reading.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. You can help your teachers by continuing always to do your best and we wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr M Capper Lead inspector