

Marlborough Infant School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 116143 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 326337 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 April 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Beryl Richmond |

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 | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–8 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 114 |
| 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 | Mrs Sue Brettell |
| Headteacher | Mrs Christine Bird |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 May 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Redvers Buller Road Aldershot GU11 2HR |
| Telephone number | 01252 323910 |
| Fax number | 01252 323910 |

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Age group | 4–8 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 April 2009 |
| Inspection number | 326337 |

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Marlborough Infant is an oversubscribed small school. Most pupils have one or more parents serving in the Armed Forces and live in accommodation provided. Half the pupils have recent experience of a parent serving in a war zone. Two thirds of the pupils are of White British heritage. Most other pupils are Nepalese and are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The needs of these pupils include dyslexia, behavioural, emotional and social needs, speech, language and communication difficulties and physical disabilities. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational needs is average. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Many more pupils than is usual join or leave the school other than at the expected times and sometimes many pupils leave or join the school at the same time because of regimental moves. The school makes provision for Reception-aged children in an Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. There is an adjacent Army Welfare provision for younger children in the Clock Tower Pre-school. A breakfast and after school club, Kids Den, is run by a private provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Marlborough Infant is a good school. The school provides excellent pastoral care, academic guidance and support for its pupils, which leads to pupils developing exceptionally well personally and achieving well. It is particularly successful in being responsive to the Army community that it serves and consequently pupils are happy and settled. It correctly describes itself as 'a compassionate school that gets on with the job in hand'. Pupils are very polite and self-confident and behave exceptionally well. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. Pupils say that they love coming to school and their enjoyment of school is excellent. Typically parents say 'My daughter loves to go to school every day and is excited to meet her teacher, who does a great job'. Excellent links with a wide range of organisations support pupils' welfare and learning. For example, the local Army community plays an active part in the life of the school. On a daily basis, the school is very supportive of pupils and their families through its 'open door' policy.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 in 2008 and pupils continued to make good progress in Year 3. The fact that a high proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual time has a detrimental impact on the standards achieved overall. Girls' standards were higher than girls' standards nationally, while boys' standards were below boys' standards nationally. Most pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities were, however, boys. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieved standards in line with similar pupils nationally. Pupils who spend all of their education at Marlborough Infant School achieve higher standards than the national average generally. Reading and writing standards are improving because of developments in the way that letters and sounds are regularly taught in groups, which are tailored specifically to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with dyslexia, behavioural, emotional and social needs, speech, language and communication difficulties and physical disabilities make good progress because the school assesses their needs very promptly. They are then provided with good quality support in groups and in one-to-one sessions for their learning and, if necessary, for their emotional development. In the green class nurture group, staff successfully help pupils to become more confident and more able to build positive relationships. Pupils learning English as an additional language make rapid progress because of support provided by specialist teachers and ongoing support provided in school.

Pupils achieve well because teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. The school also sets challenging targets and rigorously tracks pupils' progress against these targets. Most lesson planning is good and meets pupils' needs. Pupils appreciate the feedback they receive from teachers to help them improve. On occasions, pupils are not able to explain their thinking clearly because they need more adult or resource support to extend their vocabulary, particularly when the whole class is working together. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 enjoy learning German, as this is the language that is most likely to be useful to them, bearing in mind their parents' possible postings.

Leadership and management and their capacity to bring about further improvement are good. The headteacher's leadership is very good. Parents appreciate the fact that she is in the playground each morning to greet them and their children. A cohesive staff team evaluates the work of the school well to clearly identify priorities to bring about sustained improvement. They can demonstrate the positive impact of their past actions on pupils' personal development and achievement. The area for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection has

been successfully addressed. The school benefits from a very committed and supportive governing body, which knows the school well and holds it to account. Although provision for community cohesion locally is good, national and international links are insufficiently developed. However, many pupils have experience of living in other countries and in other areas of Britain.

Attendance is just below average. The main reason for this is because pupils are away from school for compassionate reasons, usually when a parent has returned from a war zone. Otherwise, most pupils attend school regularly and on time. There are rigorous systems in place to follow up absences and to reward pupils for good attendance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's starting points are below those expected for their ages in all areas of learning, but especially in language development where they have limited knowledge and use of vocabulary, and in the calculation aspect of numeracy. They make good progress so that by the time they start Year 1, although standards remain below those expected, they are beginning to catch up to what is expected for their age. Children's progress is good because teaching and learning are good and the curriculum is interesting and practical. Parents are appreciative of the good start their children make to school life. Children settle happily because staff visit their homes, parents and children visit the unit and there is a strong nurturing environment. Reception children learn letters and sounds with the rest of the school and consequently work in the group that best meets their needs. Staff know the children well and keep good records of their achievements. Staff rely on their good knowledge of the children to plan the next steps in their learning in other areas of the curriculum but these steps are not always identified sufficiently in planning. Teamwork is strong and consequently children benefit from consistent routines and high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Relationships and care are excellent, so children develop well personally and academically. There is a good mix of adult-led group work and opportunities for children to follow their own curiosity so they develop skills progressively and can explore their own interests. Children make good progress, indicating that the impact of leadership and management is good. Clear priorities for improvement are set. For example, although the outdoor area offers children opportunities to learn in all areas of the curriculum, it lacks a cover which would enable children to learn and play outdoors whatever the weather. The school has plans in hand to remedy this and to develop this area further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Fully evaluate the school's provision for community cohesion and build stronger national and international links.
- Raise standards and achievement by ensuring that every opportunity is taken to develop pupils' vocabulary in all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The starting points for the current Year 2 pupils were exceptionally low but the class is now on track to attain broadly national average standards in reading, writing and mathematics this year, similar to those achieved in 2008. The composition of the class has changed significantly since the time the pupils were in Reception and some pupils have recently arrived at the school. Year 3 pupils are making good progress, as is the rest of the school. Pupils who have dyslexia, behavioural, emotional and social needs, speech, language and communication difficulties and

physical disabilities and those learning English as an additional language receive good support so that they make as good progress as their peers. Recent external moderation of Year 2 assessments confirmed that the school's judgements were accurate.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils celebrate the festivals of their various religions and learn about other cultures through events such as Chinese New Year. They are clear about who they could go to if they were worried about anything. They take part in a wide variety of physical activities, including learning to play tennis with a local club, and know about eating healthily and drinking water. Visits from the Army Dental Centre instil in pupils the need for good dental health. They take their responsibilities as school council members, as members of the Good Manners Gang and as leaders for Huff and Puff very seriously and support charities for school fundraising. On a daily basis pupils make an excellent contribution to their own community by being especially welcoming to visitors, by being friendly and helpful to new pupils and to each other. Pupils help with the smooth running of the school by taking responsibility for classroom jobs and by being library monitors. Pupils are developing well their real-life mathematical skills through activities like the ordering of the Huff and Puff equipment. Pupils' preparation for their next school is good. They develop excellent personal skills, such as self-confidence and positive attitudes, and their achievement in academic skills is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and generally plan well to meet their needs. They make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn so that judgements can be made on the success of the learning. Pupils engage with their work well because they learn in a positive, productive environment and relationships are excellent. They often investigate practically, which they greatly enjoy. For example, Year 3 pupils investigated the nets of three-dimensional shapes to decide whether they were prisms or not. Although teachers highlight new vocabulary, there is not always sufficient visual support for pupils who have difficulty remembering new words so that they can fully engage in the speaking and listening opportunities that teachers provide for them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

To improve writing, pupils are being given more opportunities to write at length and, to improve mathematics, the school is focusing on giving pupils more opportunities to explain their thinking, especially when solving problems. The full impact of these initiatives is yet to be seen. All pupils benefit from the opportunity to learn music, sport, drama and creative arts from specialist teachers, which they thoroughly enjoy. A wide range of visits, visitors and clubs provides further enrichment. In particular, an after school club to support the learning of English is very popular. The school always commemorates Remembrance Day and other significant events in military history, like the 60th anniversary of VE Day in 2005. The impact of the excellent personal, social and health education provision is seen in pupils' outstanding personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Child protection and safeguarding procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language is very good, including the use of specialist advice, if necessary. Close collaboration with outside agencies and families to deal with any persistent pupil absence usually improves pupils' attendance. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress and identify areas for improvement. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress. Systems are kept under review and improved so that pupils are developing well into independent learners who know what they need to learn to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher forms a strong leadership team with the deputy headteacher and the administration officer. The impact of their work can be seen in pupils' good achievement, excellent personal development and well-being and sustained improvement. The school's strategic plan is clearly focused on priorities identified from monitoring and local authority initiatives. Subject leaders report regularly to the governing body on progress in their subjects. However, they do not have written action plans with specific success criteria which would enable them to more accurately measure the impact of any initiative they put in place. More experienced staff give useful feedback to colleagues and this has helped to ensure that teaching and learning are good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|

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? | 1 |
| 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? | 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 | 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 |

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 | 2 |

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? | 1 |

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 | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| 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**

23 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marlborough Infant School, Aldershot, GU11 2HR

Thank you very much for helping me during the inspection, particularly by talking to me about your school. I was very impressed by your friendliness and politeness, especially how many of you greeted me by name. You go to a good school. Here are some of the best things about your school.

- You achieve well so that by the time you leave this school, you are doing well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Your behaviour is excellent. Your classrooms are pleasant places to learn in and you have excellent relationships with adults in school.
- Your school has some excellent links with many other organisations, like the Army and other schools, which provide interesting opportunities for you to learn.
- Your school has strong links with your parents and families so that they are involved in your learning and have a clear idea of how well you are achieving.
- Adults take very good care of you and ensure that if you need help, you know who to talk to if you are worried about anything.
- You are developing exceptionally well personally and understand very well about staying healthy and keeping safe. You contribute well to your school community, for example, as members of the school council. You are particularly welcoming to new pupils and friendly and helpful to each other on a daily basis.

I have asked your school to help you to improve the range of words and their meanings that you know. This will help you improve not only your writing but also your achievement in all subjects. Also, I have asked your school to establish stronger links with pupils in other schools in Britain and abroad so that you can share with them how you live, and learn about their lives. For example, they may believe in a different religion from yours or have parents who work in other jobs.

I would like to send you my very best wishes for your future success in whatever you choose to do.

Yours faithfully

Beryl Richmond

Lead Inspector