

Marton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120462
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327289
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Colin Henderson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	79
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 Steve Spence
Headteacher	Mr Roger Gray
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Stow Park Road Marton Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 5AG
Telephone number	01427718224
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small village school. Most children come from the local village of Marton and an increasing number come from outside the immediate locality. All pupils speak English as their first language. The number of children who find learning more difficult is below average for a school of this size. The skills and knowledge of children who start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) varies from year to year, although it is usually just below national expectations. The school has been awarded the Active Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The many positive comments given by pupils and parents, such as 'a wonderful school!' exemplify how highly this school is valued. They reflect accurately that it is indeed a good school. Several parents chose to send their children to the school because 'they benefit hugely from the caring, extended family approach'. As a result, pupils achieve well as they feel happy, enjoy their learning and benefit from consistently effective teaching and a good range of learning activities. One parent commented that 'it is a pleasure to see the children enjoying their time in school and their confidence and enthusiasm never cease to amaze us'. The good leadership and management, as shown in the purposeful leadership of the headteacher, focus consistently on improving the school. He has encouraged a strong team approach that fully involves an effective governing body. They have an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and what areas need to be improved. The good partnership that the school has developed with parents supports pupils in their learning.

Reception children benefit from a good start in Class 1. This is built on successfully because pupils remain in the same class for two more years so that teaching and support staff know each pupil very well and plan carefully to meet their learning needs. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain above average standards and well above average in reading. Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6, and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average overall, although they sometimes vary as numbers in each year group are small. Pupils who find learning more difficult benefit from good support and make good progress towards their learning targets. Teachers give a sharper focus, since the last inspection, on ensuring that higher attaining pupils are challenged consistently to attain higher standards. This has led to an increasing number attaining above average levels, for example, in science.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the good curriculum in which staff work very hard to use their own expertise, for example, in French and physical education, to extend pupils' learning. Pupils value the good range of extra-curricular activities, such as those offered by Lincolnshire Arts and a local sports confederation. This is reflected in success on the sports field, for example, in cross-country competitions and in the displays of high quality art work around the school.

Pupils' good personal development is a key factor in supporting their achievement. They speak enthusiastically about their school, are keen to achieve and their attendance is good. The school has high expectations of pupils' response to each other and very effective procedures to minimise any disruptive behaviour. This results in excellent relationships and behaviour throughout the school. Pupils understand and adopt healthy and safe lifestyles well. They talk with pride about belonging to such a caring school community and their good contributions to the local community, for example, through participation in the village feast and activities organised by the Trent Valley Partnership. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different faiths, beliefs and lifestyles of communities in this country and in other parts of the world have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The excellent personal care and support reflect the school's strong focus on each individual pupil. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are happy, secure and ready to learn and this contributes significantly to their achievement. In Years 5 and 6, pupils benefit from excellent academic guidance on how to improve their work. Teachers encourage these pupils to take on more responsibility for their learning, for example, through self and peer-assessment. This helps to raise standards, although such outstanding practices are not yet as well developed enough in other classes.

The headteacher, his staff and governors ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities and are included fully in the life of the school. They make good use of assessment data to check pupils' achievement. They set targets, based on pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, in English, mathematics and science for the end of Years 4 and 6. These targets are not always challenging enough to ensure that progress is as good as it could be. Some subject leaders evaluate well how pupils are doing in subjects and their monitoring has helped to raise standards, for example, in science. However, staff changes have limited the development of a rigorous system to check on subject provision in some other subjects, particularly literacy.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Reception children make a good start to their school life because of the outstanding care, good teaching and a well-organised range of activities. The teacher, working successfully with her effective teaching assistant, has created a positive learning atmosphere in which everyone cares for each other and is very keen to do well. Children enjoy and benefit from the extra care and support from many of the older Year 2 pupils in the class. They take great pride in ensuring that the younger ones are happy and enjoying school. Children adjust quickly to working and playing with others and respond very well to the clear expectations of the staff.

The teacher, together with her experienced assistant, plans in detail to provide good opportunities in each area of learning. They make effective use of the excellent, spacious indoor and outdoor areas. The balance between adult-directed and children's choice of activities is good. Activities in the outdoor area are not always linked closely enough to the focus of the indoor work to reinforce children's learning. Staff use questions well to encourage children to share their ideas. However, some opportunities to extend children's language skills are not developed fully, for example, when identifying and describing different materials. Most children make good progress. They attain the goals expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1, and many exceed them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further refine and sharpen tracking procedures to ensure that individual pupils in each year group make consistently good progress towards challenging achievement targets.
- Establish a rigorous system to help subject leaders check how well pupils are doing in their subjects, particularly literacy.
- Extend good practice to encourage all pupils to take increasing responsibility for improving their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good in the EYFS and in Years 1 to 6. It supports above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Standards in reading are often well above average because of the good teaching of key skills and the good support of parents and volunteer helpers to extend children's understanding. Pupils' writing skills are not as high as their reading, although still generally above average. An increased focus on improving these skills is raising standards. Pupils' enthusiastic participation, supported by effective and knowledgeable teaching, helps them attain good standards in many other subjects, for example, sporting and musical activities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted successfully by a caring ethos that is reflected clearly in every aspect of school life. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school. They contribute effectively to the school and local communities. For example, with the help of a trained supervisor, older pupils organise and play with the younger ones at lunchtimes. This ensures that all are purposefully involved. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of safe practices, particularly water safety, mainly because of their weekly whole school swimming sessions. Effective links with a local business partnership help to organise such team activities as the 'K Nex Challenge'. This offers pupils insights into how the world of work operates. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take an increasing responsibility for their own learning through self and peer assessment, although such initiatives are not developed enough in some other classes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good and is a key factor in supporting pupils' achievement. Teachers know their pupils very well and work in effective partnerships with teaching assistants to provide excellent individual support. They plan and organise their lessons carefully to build successfully on prior learning and meet the broad range of different learning needs. Teachers use resources effectively, for example, the interactive whiteboard, to focus pupils' attention and extend their learning. The use of innovative learning materials to grasp pupils' interest and excitement is in the early stages of development. Some teachers, particularly with older pupils, use marking and target setting strategies very constructively to help pupils improve their work, although these are not consistently effective in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils and their parents value the broad curriculum that is enhanced by good extra-curricular activities. It encourages pupils to participate and extend their skills and knowledge. Careful planning ensures that all pupils are included fully in lessons, some with the valuable help of support staff. The school creates smaller groups, for example, in literacy and numeracy, to provide more focused individual work. Good use is made of teachers' expertise to motivate pupils and improve their standards, for example, in physical education and French. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in subjects other than English. However, subject management in literacy does not ensure that these are planned carefully to extend pupils' skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of pastoral care, support and guidance given to each pupil is at the very heart of the school's approach. It is valued highly and is a key to the school's philosophy and effectiveness. There are secure systems for ensuring pupils' safety and protection. Extremely thorough risk assessments ensure pupils feel safe inside school and on visits. Pupils say that

any bullying or harassment is very rare. Teaching and support staff work very successfully together to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need. Some excellent practice in Years 5 and 6 is particularly successful in guiding pupils to improve their work. Such initiatives include the use of personal targets, informative marking and enabling pupils to assess their own work or that of a friend. These help them to take on more responsibility for their learning and raise the standard of their work. An outstandingly well-organised programme and use of a quiet area ensure that pupils can choose to do a very wide range of activities at lunchtimes. For example, lunchtime supervisors manage sessions excellently which mean pupils of all ages take part in a variety of team games due to the school's positive approach to quality play.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

'The headteacher continues to lead the school well. It is a well run school.' Such parental comments show they value the purposeful leadership of the headteacher. He is supported effectively by a good staff team and a supportive and influential governing body. They recognise the importance of the school's role in the local community and work hard to promote community cohesion and to broaden pupils' horizons beyond their locality. The headteacher and governors have successfully managed a period of staff change to maintain good teaching and learning. They have established effective partnerships with other local schools to enhance the quality of education provided. A detailed school development plan provides a clear direction for improvement. Effective tracking procedures have been established to check on pupils' achievements, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The system is used to inform individual pupil targets for the end of Years 4 and 6. It is not yet consistently used to raise attainment, for example, by setting a challenging target for each pupil to achieve by the end of each year. Although there is some effective practice evident in school, staff changes have limited the involvement of some key subject leaders, especially literacy, in checking rigorously how well pupils are achieving.

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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?	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?	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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	1
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**

23 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marton Primary School, Marton, DN21 5AG

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you about what you do in school, looking at your work and watching you learn. You clearly enjoy school and, together with your parents, you think that it is a good school - I agree.

I was pleased to see how well you get on together. Your behaviour is excellent and this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to so many of you and find out how proud you are of your school. I was particularly interested to hear from some Year 6 pupils about how you care for each other, for example, organising and playing games together at lunchtimes. You told me that you learn a lot in school and enjoy your work, especially the good range of interesting activities. I think that you are all making good progress in your lessons. This is because your teachers plan and organise your lessons well and you try hard to do what your teachers ask.

Mr Gray and his staff are trying to help you learn as well as possible and are keeping careful checks on your progress, for example, by setting you targets to achieve in English, mathematics in science. I have asked them to continue to check that you all make good progress towards your end of year targets. I have also asked your school to provide more opportunities for teachers who are responsible for subjects to assess how well you are doing and see if they can help you achieve even better, especially in literacy. Many of you, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are beginning to take more responsibility for your own learning so that you achieve even better. I have asked Mr Gray and his staff to encourage more of you to take on this responsibility.

Thank you again for helping me to find out about your school and I hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Best wishes

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector