

# Martock Church of England VA Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123856
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	328006
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Caroline McKee

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	262
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>	Elizabeth Powell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Selby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 June 2006
<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>	Elmleigh Road Martock TA12 6EF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01935 823486
<b>Fax number</b>	01935 823652

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision in two Reception classes. There is also on-site childcare provision which is not managed by the governing body. Most of the children come from the local village and are White British with lower than average learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A new headteacher has been in post since January 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Martock Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The sense of energy and purpose generated by the new headteacher has resulted in considerable improvements in the last six months. The school's ambition is well voiced and shared by all staff who welcome this new steer. However, this vision has not been formally presented in a complete development plan or written self-evaluation statement. This means that the governing body do not meet their statutory requirements and plans are not there to guide and monitor progress. Despite this, they have done much work to ensure that the school and community work with a common purpose and they are holding the school to account in shorter term priorities. The headteacher inherited a large financial deficit. This has necessitated the restructuring of the school staff and classes. Many parents recognise that this has been a difficult situation to manage but a few remain concerned and would like clarity of the school's plans for September in light of recent reductions in staffing. The majority of parents are supportive of the school and say that their children are happy, better behaved and safe. As one parent typically commented, 'The school has a great community atmosphere.'

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The current group of children are on track to reach above average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory through the school and they reach broadly average standards from their starting points. Last year's improvements have been consolidated after a period of underachievement for the previous two years. This is the result of higher expectations, a sharper focus on pupils' progress, more challenging targets and more consistent use of performance data to gear work to individual pupils' needs.

Pupils speak positively of the ethos of the school as one which is caring and where everyone gets on well with each other. Warm, friendly relationships amongst the whole-school community are typical. Pupils enjoy coming to school, though attendance has fallen from good to satisfactory. This is largely due to parents taking their children on holidays during school time. Good personal development is encouraged by the good quality of pastoral care. Guidance and support for their work, though improving, is satisfactory. Many pupils attend a wide variety of after school clubs and activities. The inclusive nature of school activities is a distinctive feature of the school and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated seamlessly into all school activities. Pupils' contributions to the local community are particularly strong. Year 6 pupils are good role models for the younger children, for example, when they work with them to help to prepare them for Year 1.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Inconsistencies are being ironed out through a range of supportive strategies. The use of more challenging targets is encouraging pupils and teachers to aim higher but this is not sufficient for the most able pupils. Many teachers provide tasks to develop pupils' skills and independence. However, this remains inconsistent and not all teachers are effective in ensuring pupils know what to do to improve their day-to-day work to meet their targets. The school's curriculum is good and exciting. It has been refined to match pupils' aspirations more closely, offering amongst other additional courses, a 'Forest School' which promotes outdoor education. This is a major contribution to the pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and, given what has already been achieved in a short time without formal plans, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The children, this year, started with average skills and now have above average skills to move into Year 1. Good relationships with staff and with their peers, care from the staff and the quality of information received before they arrive ensure that the children settle quickly. Parents are very appreciative of this. As one parent wrote, reflecting the views of many, 'The Early Years Foundation Stage staff are superb and have given my children the best start to their school life.' The children feel safe, confident and happy at school. They play and behave very well. The staff plan how to develop the children's learning effectively, inside the classroom and in the outside learning areas. They capture their interest and assess their needs accurately, including very early identification of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. During group activities, the children are well supported by adults to guide their learning but there is also a good balance of child-initiated activities. The development of the children's personal skills is outstanding because of excellent care and guidance. The children are mature, talk articulately to adults and have positive relationships with the older pupils who help them. The inside accommodation is good. The outside area is uncovered so children are unable to continue outdoor activities in wet weather and many of the toys and resources are rather old and well worn. This slightly demotivates some children from using them to good effect. Leadership and management are good, ensuring that staff work well together. All these factors result in the children making good progress.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the governing body formally agrees the development plan so that they are able to hold the school suitably to account and meet their statutory requirements.
- Ensure that the school's development plan and self-evaluation processes are in place and used to drive improvements forward.
- Share the best teaching practice effectively and improve the use of assessment information, including marking, to involve pupils more in understanding their targets and speeding up the progress for higher attaining pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

National tests in 2008 and teacher assessments showed standards reached by pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 were broadly average. Pupils achieved satisfactorily overall. The percentage of Year 6 pupils who reached average levels in mathematics was below average but those gaining the higher levels were above. This appears to have been reversed in 2009 with fewer more able pupils likely to reach the higher levels. Far more may reach average levels. Pupils' legacy of recent underachievement appears to have been remedied from last year and is on track to improve further in 2009. The school, having analysed past data on pupils' progress better, has improved the planning of lessons and use of target setting. As a result, pupils are making faster progress, currently reaching standards that are just above average in all core subjects in Years 1 to 6. Good links to everyday life skills help the pupils to understand where and how they can use their mathematical skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory

progress academically but make better progress in their social skills because of the caring and supportive environment. Above expected standards are reached in physical education and information and communication technology (ICT).

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' understanding of healthy living is outstanding. They participate enthusiastically in a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities and even the youngest pupils understand the basic principles of how to live healthily. The school council has a strong voice and ensures that the school is friendly and safe. They enjoyed taking part in the interview process for their new headteacher. The pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe is reflected in their improved, good behaviour in lessons but not always at break times when a few can be a little rough and boisterous when playing games. Their positive attitudes and relationships with adults and with each other show their enjoyment of school and they know who to talk to if they have any worries. Although they enjoy coming to school a great deal, their overall attendance has dropped from good to satisfactory because of the number of children that are taken on holidays during the school term. Pupils support each other well and are considerate of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pupils have satisfactory skills in literacy and numeracy and their good enterprise skills help to prepare them well for their future education and the later world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving. There are, however, variations from class to class. In some lessons, teachers do not fully challenge the higher attaining pupils or provide pupils with enough information to enable them to find out what they need to do next if they have achieved a certain skill. In some lessons, pupils are well challenged so that they work effectively and consolidate their knowledge with tasks that are exciting and develop team-building and problem-solving skills. This is not yet consistent across all classes and teachers do not link planning with specific attainment levels or share these with the pupils. Teaching assistants work well with the teachers, both in planning and in supporting the pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Spiritual, social, cultural and moral aspects are integral in all teaching, though pupils are less secure about life in a multicultural society. Teachers mostly made good reference to the stimulating displays found in all classrooms, helping pupils to link basic skills to a range of subjects. ICT is used well by the teachers and pupils use improved skills effectively in their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has developed an exciting curriculum that stimulates the pupils and has had a big impact on raising achievement and interest. Additional activities such as the Forest School have enabled pupils to develop different learning skills in an adventurous and stimulating outdoor environment. This is particularly well led and managed. The whole school community is rightly proud of the pupils' thriving vegetable garden. It would outshine many vegetable plots! A thematic approach and the use of different resources from the Early Years Foundation Stage

upwards has regenerated interest and improved skills in writing and reading, particularly for boys throughout the school. This also supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. During the visit, excellent management of a transition project enabled Year 6 pupils to gain confidence and to improve their organisation skills when working with the youngest children to help them feel more settled when they move up to Year 1 in September. Many pupils take part in the varied extra-curricular programme and pupils say that they particularly enjoy the residential trips and opportunities in music. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, helping them to develop well personally and socially while supporting satisfactory academic progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a very caring and supportive family atmosphere where all pupils feel very safe and secure. This enables them to enjoy their activities so they make good progress in their personal development. The school is making satisfactory, but improving, progress in guiding them academically. The school meets all statutory requirements in relation to child protection and risk assessment. The school is proactive in creating new links and making sure that pupils move to their secondary schools as smoothly as possible. Links with other organisations help to ensure that pupils receive good personal care. Individual academic targets are set and reviewed but these are not always referred to in lessons and this is slowing progress, especially for higher attaining pupils. Marking is starting to have a positive impact but does not refer to the pupils' targets systematically or tell them what they need to improve next.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The recently appointed headteacher has provided clarity of purpose and direction, which is starting to have a positive impact. His leadership is complemented well by the senior leadership team and they work cohesively together. The majority of the school community has bought into this vision and there is a strong commitment to improve through teamwork. There are, however, a few parents who are yet to be convinced. The headteacher recognises the need to be more proactive in taking the opportunities to hear and respond quickly to their views. This is especially so with regard to the inherited financial deficit which has led to redundancies and the concerns of how this will affect the organisation of the school this September. Teachers say they feel cared for but more accountable. Improvement is already evident, such as in more consistent approaches to behaviour management and the use of assessment. Senior staff and class teachers are using performance data increasingly well to analyse trends and spot those making slower progress, but this is not yet consistent, especially when setting challenging targets for the most able pupils. Many plans are at the discussion stage and need to be firmed up and recorded in order for them to be evaluated, improved and agreed. This has not been enforced by the governing body and is slowing aspects of otherwise good improvement. As such, they have not met their statutory requirements. Despite this, governors are increasingly becoming active and better informed as to how challenging they need to be in their roles as critical friends. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good in many respects, but not in relation to raising pupils' understanding of national and multicultural communities. Currently, with a lack of formal or adopted planning, the school has a satisfactory, rather than good, capacity to improve further.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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

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<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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	4
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**

24 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Martock Church of England Primary School, Martock TA12 6EF

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you had to say.

Your school is satisfactory and improving. Your new headteacher is already helping the teachers to improve your work and the way in which you learn is helped by your good and exciting curriculum, especially the Forest School. He has good plans for the future but now needs to write these down for the governors to check. We found that you make satisfactory progress and that you reached average standards in most subjects and above expectations in physical education and information and communication technology. Your tennis and throwing skills were impressive. You have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily. Teaching is satisfactory and improving and you told us that you enjoyed learning most when the lessons were fun and active and when you could learn from each other. Satisfactory and improving guidance is helping you to improve your learning but you said that you did not always know exactly what your targets were or what you needed to do next to improve. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because of good teaching and all the different opportunities that are on offer to you which are managed so well.

We thought that the teachers were very caring and that they help you to develop good personal skills so that you respect the views of others and celebrate successes. We saw how you cared and helped each other when needed but that, although your behaviour has improved, some of you are a bit rough when playing games at break times. We would like you to be more careful of each other, but still have fun. Your attendance has dropped from good to satisfactory because some of you are taking holidays in the term time.

- So that the school can improve further, we have suggested that
- the governors ensure that the plans for improvement and an evaluation statement are written down and approved by them
- the headteacher writes these plans for all to see
- the teachers give you more information on how to improve your work and have higher expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve.

We wish you every success for the future

Yours faithfully Caroline McKee

Lead Inspector