

Marsh Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101211
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	335673
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Liz Duffy

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Streete
Headteacher	Mrs Natalie Sanchez
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, the school's policies, the questionnaires submitted by staff and by pupils in Years 3 to 6, and 124 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the improvements made since the last inspection in relation to: raising achievement in Key Stage 1, the awareness of pupils of their performance and what they need to do to improve, and how well children are prepared for the transition in their learning from Reception to Year 1
- how well pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve at the end of Year 6
- how successfully middle attaining pupils are being challenged in English and mathematics
- the success of strategies to improve attendance.

Information about the school

This is mainly a one-form-entry primary school, except in Year 1 where there are two classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage has a Reception class and a Nursery. There is also a children's centre on site which is run privately. The large majority of pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds of which the largest group is Black or Black African. A few pupils are from the local Traveller community. Almost half of the school population speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average; most have moderate learning difficulties. From January 2009 an associate headteacher has been in post reporting to an executive headteacher who was running another local school at the time of the inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

'Flying towards our dreams' is an apt motto for this good school where pupils are well prepared for future life. The school's outstanding relationship with parents, the excellent care and support that is provided for every child and the insistence upon the highest standards of behaviour combine to create an exceptionally safe and happy environment for pupils. As quoted from a pupil questionnaire: 'The school is a pleasant place to be where we have fun while learning.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities for reflection; they value each other and have a high awareness of global diversity.

Pupils make good progress: children enter the school performing well below expectations and leave at the end of Year 6 attaining in line with national averages. Pupils receive consistently good and outstanding teaching in Key Stage 2 where there has been a focus upon providing more opportunities to practise writing and extending pupils' experience of interactive problem-solving games in mathematics. Boys perform particularly well in science. Throughout the school, pupils of Black or Black African heritage perform well in comparison to pupils from their ethnic background nationally. The school uses oracy to underpin learning and this has enabled pupils who speak English as an additional language to achieve as well as their peers. This is also true of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities where those who are on school action perform particularly well. For the past two years, performance has risen in Key Stage 1 where pupils at the end of Year 2 perform in line with the national average; this has in part been due to earlier intervention when pupils underperform and a closer liaison with parents regarding how they can support at home. White British boys and those pupils from any other White background do not perform as well as their Black or Black British African peers in this phase. Expectations are not always high enough for middle attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1 where the tasks that they are given do not always demand enough of them.

Children make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staffing issues have led to some variation in teaching and the quality of provision. In particular the range of experiences in Nursery is limited and opportunities are missed to link indoor to outdoor learning.

School self-evaluation is thorough and rigorous and findings influence actions for improvement. Pupil opinion is sought regularly and helps to inform the development of key aspects of the school's work; for example, with the implementation of the creative curriculum. Targets are suitably challenging and the support given to pupils in Years 1 to 6 is suitably underpinned by strong assessment procedures which readily identify underperformance. This type of effective tracking system which focuses upon groups as

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well as individuals is not in place in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has an impact on the children's rates of progress due to the lack of data to help inform planning and delivery. The extent of the school's success in raising performance since the last inspection, improving attendance, behaviour and governance demonstrates that its capacity to sustain improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards achieved by middle attaining pupils through ensuring they benefit from a variety of challenging activities in the classroom; in particular, raising expectations of what they might achieve in Key Stage 1.
- Improve standards reached by children at the end of the Reception Year by
 - embedding a tracking system which helps teachers to understand and act upon groups' performances
 - ensuring lessons contain a variety of activities which are matched to all pupils' needs
 - linking indoor and outdoor learning explicitly in nursery lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

'School is fun' is a quote from a Year 5 pupil, which illustrates the 100% agreement in the pupil questionnaires that they enjoy being at this school. They feel highly involved in decision-making. Pupils who are in the school council take pride in the fact that they have contributed to the experiences of younger pupils who enthuse about the new playground toys. Pupils engage readily with adults; they are articulate and succinct about the education and experiences they receive at school. In lessons, they listen carefully and feel comfortable to ask questions of their teachers and peers. High levels of vocabulary are displayed and opportunities are provided which promote reflection and discussion. Learning is frequently applied to everyday life which helps pupils to understand how to use their developing skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and outperform similar groups of pupils in national tests. These pupils benefit from high quality support given by teaching assistants.

The different opportunities for pupils to be leaders have given them a clear sense of responsibility and as such they care passionately about how well their school performs and how they can help to make it even better. The buddy system is popular and provides a mechanism for pupils to celebrate the behaviour of their peers. The school has the healthy schools award and pupils confidently discuss nutrition; all pupils stated in the questionnaires that the school helped them to be healthy.

Attendance has risen sharply in recent years and is now good. The school has introduced a range of creative strategies to improve attendance and these are now having impact through being explicitly linked to rewards for pupils. As one pupil

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commented in the questionnaires: 'I have great attendance because I enjoy school.'

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons there is a good pace of learning and activities which match pupils' needs. The majority of lessons have high levels of engagement and enjoyment, with paired talk being a key feature of activities. The key aims of each lesson are shared so that pupils have a clear sense of what is expected of them. Able pupils are challenged by open and extension questions, a range of resources to read and tasks to complete under pressure. Strategies for stretching the learning of pupils who attain midway in the class are not as effective. Expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons are not high enough in Key Stage 1. In lessons observed, opportunities were missed to extend the learning of this group; for example, in a science lesson pupils would have progressed more quickly if they had been given less time on the practise questions which they could do well and more time on the challenging extension questions which they found more difficult. Pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to progress. Assessment in books is helpful and identifies steps for pupils to improve.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The curriculum provides pupils with rich opportunities for high quality learning. Pupils really enjoy the creative curriculum where they are given learning challenges based on a range of subjects such as geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, art and physical education. They appreciate the opportunity to decide how they are going to meet the challenges and are able to demonstrate learning via a variety of media such as music and design. Pupils like choosing the way in which they learn. They benefit from a range of enrichment events, such as pyjama day which is focused upon the enjoyment of literacy and numeracy; pupils experience a range of activities such as sharing stories and a sleepwalking activity that looks at angles.

Support for pupils is outstanding. One Year 5 boy commented that he appreciated the fact that 'teachers are tolerant of my needs'. Of particular note is the work of the learning support assistants who know their charges well, help bolster self-esteem and through their 'can do' attitude encourage pupils to achieve their best. Pupils also benefit from a range of partnerships; for example, having an introduction to ICT at a neighbouring secondary school and a reading partners scheme with Ford.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's vision for all to attain their potential is shared by all teachers; they have a passion for their school to succeed and are proud that their school has 'a family feeling'. One member of staff in the staff questionnaires commented that it is 'a pleasure to come to school each day and work with colleagues who are so talented and committed'. Morale is high, as is the support for one another. Teachers value peer coaching which has given them time to observe and help each other. The associate headteacher has created a strong team ethos where all are involved in the decisions of the school and acting upon areas for improvement. According to one member of staff, her 'style of leadership is an inspiration and the dual approach with the executive headteacher has...played a major part in this school being the most enjoyable place I have ever worked'. Senior leaders are gaining in confidence with grading the quality of lessons, which is giving the school a secure view of strengths in teaching and any areas for improvement.

Safeguarding procedures are robust; the school has excellent risk assessment systems that are routinely informed by pupils' and parents' views. All pupils are safe and secure

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in school. Ensuring equality of opportunity is a key priority for all staff. The good levels of support given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from Traveller families ensure that they play a full part in the day-to-day life of the school and are not subject to discrimination.

Governors are hard working and an asset to the school. Their high levels of insight into the local context in which the school works help them to contribute effectively to school improvement planning. Their effective liaison with the local community has made a direct impact upon the work of staff and the experiences of the pupils; for example, the permanent gazebos which keep pupils dry were donated by a local family. The number of parent governors has now increased, representing more closely the ethnic diversity of the school. Staff appreciate governors spending time with them in lessons and the fact that they do challenge decisions; for example, questioning whether it is best for the school to spend money on digital visualisers instead of interactive whiteboards to help engage pupils in their learning.

All three areas of community cohesion are strong: the school has comprehensive plans in place which address faith, ethnicity and culture and strong links with not just the local community but also the wider global community. Pupils enjoy writing to their linked school in Nigeria and demonstrate a high understanding of the world around them.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle in well and are very supportive of one another; for example, those children who are fluent English speakers help those

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who are not able to speak much English. This is supported through routine oral practice which reinforces understanding for all children. They are also well prepared for when they enter Year 1. The children know routines and there is close liaison with the Year 1 teachers. One parent whose children had recently joined the school in Year 1 and in the Nursery commented that they had 'settled in wonderfully'.

There is good use made of a variety of resources to help learning and there is ample provision for physical activities. In order to improve children's experiences of writing teachers have planned more opportunities for writing; for example, building large words and letters when undertaking construction. Time is not always used effectively which means that children are sitting on the carpet for too long when they could be learning more actively. Planning does not clearly link experiences in different areas of learning across indoor and outdoor settings. For example, during a Nursery lesson all children were expected to be outside and this limited opportunities for them to undertake the indoor activities available. Children make satisfactory progress through Nursery and Reception. A key area recognised for improvement by the school is to make more effective use of data to track the performance of groups of children. This is to better inform the planning of lessons and the support needed for less able children and thereby raise standards at the end of the Reception Year. Leadership and management are satisfactory for this phase.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents are enthusiastic about the education and experiences the pupils at Marsh Green receive. An overwhelming majority of parents believe their child enjoys school and is making good progress. One parent commented that they were impressed by the 'systematic improvement' of their child and another would definitely recommend the school to other parents. There are a number of opportunities to get involved with the school from governor and parent drop-in afternoons to participating in a reading club, which has the aim of getting more parents involved in their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marsh Green Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	71	33	27	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	76	61	44	35	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	66	53	51	41	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	56	50	40	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	72	58	46	37	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	67	54	48	39	3	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	44	59	48	5	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	35	63	51	4	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	41	62	50	6	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	49	53	43	6	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	34	62	50	8	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	61	49	55	44	5	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	56	49	40	2	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marsh Green Primary School, Dagenham, RM10 9NJ

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school. In particular, I would like to thank those pupils who gave up their lunchtime to speak with us. I would also like to thank those of you in Years 3 to 6 who completed the pupil questionnaire. I am delighted to tell you that you are attending a good school and that there are a number of aspects that are excellent. Particular highlights include these things:

- Your behaviour and the way in which you look after each other
- Your enjoyment of your lessons; you all work hard and try to perform to the best of your ability
- The numerous opportunities the school gives you to try new things
- The way in which the school helps you to understand global issues.

There are two important things that we have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to do in order to improve your school further:

- To ensure that those of you who could learn a bit more quickly are challenged more in your lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2
- To check on the performance of children in Nursery and Reception so that lessons planned help them to make progress quicker.

Remember you can help teachers by letting them know when work is too easy for you.

Yours sincerely

Liz Duffy

Lead Inspector

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