

# Marhamchurch CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111991
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	337805
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alexander Baxter

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	125
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julia Holmes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jayne Biddle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Helebridge Road Bude EX23 0HY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed six teachers. They attended two assemblies and observed break, lunchtime and enrichment activities and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, 41 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and 54 questionnaires completed by pupils were analysed.

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

- the teachers' use of assessment and marking to improve pupils' progress, especially the more able pupils and those in Years 1 and 2
- pupils' behaviour and the degree to which they apply, and are helped to use, their personal skills independently and collaboratively to support their academic learning
- given significant changes in staffing and governors over the past 12 months, the degree to which leaders and managers at all levels monitor provision and its subsequent impact on pupils' skills to bring about and sustain continuous improvement in pupils' achievements.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average rural school, with five classes. Most of the classes contain pupils across two year groups. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but varies considerably and is above average in two year groups. Most needs are related to emotional and behavioural difficulties. The number of pupils who join other than at the normal time of entry varies and often these pupils have complex needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception and Year 1 class. Amongst others, the school holds Healthy School and Artsmark awards.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Marhamchurch provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. This is a school where, for some time, instability in staffing led to inconsistencies in provision and gaps in pupils' learning. However, since the beginning of the academic year, the new headteacher has established a strong commitment to improvement, which continues at a brisk pace. Good monitoring and self-evaluation and effective decision-making and action have brought significant improvements, which include the rebuilding of good provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. These improvements and strengthening team leadership and governance demonstrate the school's good capacity for further and sustained improvement.

Other main findings include:

- Currently, attainment in Year 6 is broadly average and reflects satisfactory achievement from pupils' starting points. Substantially improved teaching and learning in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, most notably the development of children as independent learners, underpins good progress in these classes
- Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 have been improved and are now satisfactory. Improvements include strengthened management of the pupils' behaviour and more specific use of targets and learning objectives to bridge gaps and promote new learning.
- Improvement still has some way to go before the good teaching and learning evident in younger classes become a consistent feature across the school. Inconsistencies remain in the level of challenge presented to the pupils and the extent to which they are expected to take responsibility for their learning. Consequently, weaknesses remain in pupils' basic handwriting, numeracy and independent learning skills.
- Pupils attend well and this reflects their enjoyment of school, particularly the good range of extra-curricular activities and visits provided for them.
- The pupils' welfare is safeguarded effectively. Although some pupils rightly express concerns about the behaviour of a few others, most talk about recent improvement and have full confidence in the good care and support provided by the staff.

The school is an inclusive community, where all pupils are valued and treated equally. The good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development shown by the vast majority of the pupils reflects their understanding of the needs and beliefs of others and their positive response to the school's caring, community ethos.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve pupils' mathematical skills, so that they are more able to recall and use basic number facts quickly, devise their own strategies, and solve problems more effectively.
- Improve pupils' handwriting skills so they are better equipped to record their ideas and complete their writing more efficiently.
- Ensure that the progress pupils make in lessons in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good by:
  - sustaining a suitable level of challenge matched well to the pupils' abilities
  - enthusing pupils with a desire to learn, for example by providing frequent opportunities to follow their own lines of enquiry independently
  - involving pupils at a more mature level in identifying what they have to do to improve.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Visits to lessons in and out of classrooms show that pupils respond most positively when they are engaged in practical activity. In assembly, for example, singing 'comes to life' when accompanied by hand gestures and clapping. When using computers or in physical activity, the older pupils sustain concentration. Similarly, in Year 1 when devising their own tests to find out which bottle holds the most water, pupils engage well and enjoy what they learn. Older pupils sustained interest well when using microscopes to examine human tissue. Most pupils enjoy presenting their ideas and take part enthusiastically in class discussions. However, a few pupils, mostly in Years 3 to 6, do not always contribute enough and even with encouragement are reticent in discussions. This reflects a weakness in previous learning that has limited their independence as learners. Teachers seek to involve pupils more as self-evaluative learners. Currently, this is more successful with younger pupils.

The quality of pupils' work and responses in lessons are improving. Their broadly average levels of attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology by the end of Year 6 reflect satisfactory achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make the same progress as their peers; a few with personal needs, including some relatively new to the school, respond well to the support they receive. Although attainment continues to improve, too many pupils still have difficulty using number facts to develop their own strategies to solve mathematical problems and several spoil their improved expressive writing through weakness in handwriting.

Pupils understand the need to lead healthy lifestyles and most readily engage in sports and healthy eating. Inspectors observed pupils participating safely and confidently in school life. When questioned, and in their questionnaire responses, a significant number of pupils expressed concerns about the misbehaviour of a few pupils. Pupils speak out confidently, however, and, as evident when undertaking their school council and other responsibilities, clearly know right from wrong and are quick to approach adults whenever they have concerns. Pupils are proud that their school is an inclusive

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community. They say they have lots of friends and most are tolerant and understanding of those with specific needs. Their good attendance reflects their enjoyment and their parents' and carers' support of school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Greater stability in teaching staff this academic year, alongside the monitoring and supportive work of the new headteacher, has brought improvement in the quality of teaching. Teaching is satisfactory with an increasing amount of good practice, especially in sharing learning objectives, negotiating targets with pupils and in supporting pupils with special educational and behavioural needs. Even so, at times, in Years 3 to 6, teachers spend too much time talking to the pupils in whole-class or large groups and, in these situations, some pupils are only passively engaged in learning. The strength of the good teaching now evident in Reception and Year 1 and 2 classes lies in the way pupils take responsibility for their learning and in the way that much of their work involves practical activity. In a mathematics lesson in the Years 1 and 2 class, for example, pupils were challenged at the right level and spent most of their time working

<sup>1</sup> 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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enthusiastically in small groups to identify fractions of different shapes. Such strategies, although being developed, are not implemented as consistently in other classes. All teachers give good oral feedback to the pupils, but the quality of marking, especially in showing pupils next steps in learning, varies through Years 3 to 6. As a result, not all pupils have a clear enough picture of how to improve, for example in mathematics, and some are not always sufficiently motivated to give of their best.

The curriculum has undergone significant improvement in recent terms. It is enriched by a good range of clubs, such as gardening club, and by regular and stimulating visits out of school, for example to the seashore, and by several church and community events. These have a beneficial impact on the pupils' good adoption of healthy living, sense of community and well-being, and are seen in awards such as Healthy School and Artsmark. Pupils use computers well to learn across the range of subjects, for example, researching topics, such as Papua New Guinea and 'New Life'. The school has strengthened its focus on literacy, but time for writing is still limited. Numeracy skills are not developed to best effect in other subjects.

Very good arrangements ensure the children settle quickly into school life and, when the time comes, good links mean that pupils are confident about going to secondary school. Effective procedures and capable assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Rewards and other strategies to promote good attendance are successful and the pupils' positive attitudes reflect the good relationships which exist between staff and pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The new headteacher's good self-evaluation procedures underpin her strong and fully shared vision for improvement. These now ensure that pupils' needs are identified and tackled as early as possible. Effective monitoring by the headteacher and, increasingly, by senior colleagues, including members of the governing body, and a corporate commitment to inclusion, ensure that pupils are treated equally and kept free from discrimination. Other recent improvements include good safeguarding of the pupils' welfare and significant refurbishment of the school's facilities, both indoors and outside. For example, the library and book stock have been refreshed, the pond area has been reclaimed and further development of areas outside the library and Reception facilities are to take place this summer. The school's ability to promote further improvement has

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been strengthened by a team approach to management and by well-considered planning for the future. However, as with other initiatives, strengthened management structures have not been in place long enough to raise attainment and achievements to the full. The school engages well with the large majority of parents and carers and readily seeks support from outside agencies. However, inconsistent procedures, for example in the use of homework, mean that improving links do not support fully pupils' learning to best effect. The school promotes community cohesion well and, by its close links with the church, plays a valued role in the local community. National and international dimensions of community cohesion are developed well through curricular topics, contributions to global and national charities and by a visit to Bristol when pupils engage first-hand with members of a multicultural community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Very supportive links with parents and carers and the pre-school help children make a good start in the Reception/Year 1 class. Staff ensure that children enjoy school and develop confidence and skills in making learning choices for themselves. Staff assess children's progress well to gain a clear understanding of what children need to learn next. As a result, good teaching and support promote good progress. Most children make particular gains in their speech and social development and, in response to recent initiatives, acquire a good understanding of letters and sounds. Good leadership, which includes excellent safeguarding of the children's welfare, ensures a good range of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves, both indoors and



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outside. Children have good opportunities to learn by using computers and can freely choose and engage in practical activity. For example, they experiment with water and sand, chalk their names in the covered area and experience pasting and modelling activities. The children particularly enjoy and benefit from 'Forest School' when using the school's well-maintained grounds to develop their ideas in a stimulating natural environment. Currently, outdoor learning requires close adult supervision and limits children's independence on occasion. However, planned improvements are set to address this issue during the summer break.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The large majority of responses to the Ofsted questionnaire and the parents and carers who spoke to inspectors were positive about the school. Most parents and carers feel their children enjoy school, are safe and are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. The very large majority of parents and carers feel that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns and are happy with the school's leadership and, in particular, 'the new head who has made some positive changes'. A minority of parents expressed concern about the pupils' readiness for the future and reflected other disagreements of a small minority, which mainly included concerns about the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress and behaviour. The inspection identified satisfactory and improving pupils' progress, but found inconsistent progress in Years 3 to 6, because of weaknesses in teaching and learning. There is no doubt that parents' and carers' concerns about slowed progress and the misbehaviour of a few pupils have been well founded, but inspectors noted the pupils' views of improved behaviour and confidence in dealing with any incidents. Inspectors' observations confirmed that children are safe in school and that behaviour continues to improve in response to good levels of staff support. Inspectors agree with parents and carers that the work of the new headteacher and changes in teaching have resulted in improvements in pupils' learning and attainment this year.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marhamchurch CofE 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 125 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	46	17	41	4	10	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	44	17	41	2	5	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	27	19	46	5	12	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	22	21	51	6	15	2	5
The teaching is good at this school	14	34	17	51	8	20	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	46	12	29	5	12	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	51	16	39	2	5	0	0
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)	8	20	18	44	6	15	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	20	23	56	8	20	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	17	22	54	6	15	4	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	41	17	41	2	5	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	22	54	12	29	3	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	46	13	32	5	12	3	7

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



16 June 2010 Dear Pupils Inspection of Marhamchurch Cof E Primary School, Bude EX23 OHY Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited recently. Thank you especially to those who took the time to talk to us about what you like about the school and what you think can be better. We enjoyed our visit. We agree with your headteacher that Marhamchurch is a satisfactory and improving school. These are the other main things we found.

- You make satisfactory progress; however some of you can do better, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Behaviour is satisfactory but, as some of you said, 'Behaviour is mostly good, but at times a few people forget the rules.' You all know an adult who you can turn to if you have a concern.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and there is an increasing amount of good teaching, especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2, which helps you to make better progress.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have strengthened how they work together and are helping you to make better progress than you have made previously.
- Staff provide good care for you and are working hard to help you learn at a faster rate in lessons and to enjoy a good range of interesting activities, both indoors and outside and at school and out of school.

To help the school to improve further and to strengthen your learning, we have asked the headteacher, senior staff, governors and teachers to do three things:

- Improve the way you use basic number facts and develop your own strategies to solve problems.
- Improve your handwriting.
- Ensure that those of you in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in lessons by giving you activities that interest you, challenge you at the right level and encourage you to work harder and take more responsibility for your own work.

You can help by thinking more carefully about how you can make your work better.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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