

# Marnel Community Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116023
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338706
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Curtis

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Warmington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Cole
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Shetland Road Popley Basingstoke RG24 9PT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 329521
<b>Fax number</b>	01256 477325
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@marnel-inf.hants.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventy per cent of the inspection time was spent looking at learning, including the 17 lessons observed. Six teachers were seen teaching their own classes. Inspectors held meetings with senior staff, members of the governing body, the school council and a group of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, assessment data, documentation relating to safeguarding and notes of visits made by the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors looked at the 118 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by members of staff.

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

- how successfully provision and leadership and management are in closing the gap in attainment between boys and girls in reading and writing
- whether more able pupils make sufficient progress in mathematics
- the quality of provision for communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

This is a two-form entry infant school that is on the same site as Marnel Community Junior School. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in two Reception classes housed in new purpose-built accommodation that opened in September 2008. Most pupils are White British, with a minority from a range of multi-ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. Most of the class teachers have been appointed to the school since the last inspection, including two who joined in September 2009.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

### Main findings

This outstanding school is on an amazing journey of improvement. In 2005, attainment was low, whereas it is now above average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' achievement is outstanding. The driving force behind the rapid improvement is the headteacher, for whom 'Failure is not an option.' She has galvanised a highly effective and dedicated team who support her 100% in the quest that each and every pupil in the school should achieve his or her very best. Rigorous and regular analysis of pupils' progress enables the school to identify potential underachievement and implement successful strategies to address it. Through rigorous analysis, the school has continued to close the gap in reading and writing where boys were not achieving as well as girls. Similarly, evidence from the inspection shows that more able pupils are challenged in mathematics because teachers plan work that challenges them. In The Early Years Foundation Stage, a relentless focus on high-quality teaching of letters and sounds, together with an environment that promotes a love of reading and writing, contributes to a significant improvement this year in children's communication, language and literacy skills.

Teachers, supported by highly skilled teaching assistants, have embraced the school's new vibrant and stimulating curriculum. Through making learning meaningful and providing topics that excite all pupils, especially boys, they create classrooms where pupils thrive. Pupils enjoy their learning and want to work hard. They love their individual targets in literacy and numeracy and take great pride, for example when they reach Level 2c in writing and then have new targets to achieve the higher Level 2b. As teaching captures their interests so successfully, pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. Pupils take great pride in serving on the school council and in taking on roles, such as 'playground buddies'. While improving, pupils' attendance is just below the national average, despite the school's best efforts to ensure that all parents and carers value the importance of their children attending school.

Governors are very supportive of the school and their contribution to the leadership and management of the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. While they have detailed plans in place to promote the national and international dimensions of community cohesion, these have not been implemented fully. Taking into consideration the track record of school improvement and the drive and ambition of all staff and governors, the school has outstanding capacity for future improvement.

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

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- Improve pupils' attendance so that it is consistently above 94% by July 2010 by
- implementing across the school the successful initiatives in Year 2.
- Implement fully the current plans to develop the national and international dimensions of community cohesion.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

Pupils love being at school and there is absolutely no evidence that issues with attendance relate to pupils not wanting to come to school. In lessons, pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They show impressive levels of sustained concentration, especially when writing. Boys are as equally enthusiastic as girls, for example, when writing the instructions for board games that they have invented. In discussion with the school council, most members said that writing was their favourite subject. A strength in many lessons is the way pupils support and help each other. This is particularly evident in information and communication technology where pupils are very keen to teach each other key skills. Peer support for pupils with English as an additional language is especially good. Pupils relish challenges. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2 when pupils had challenging number sequences to continue, there were cries of, 'I really like doing this.' It is such enjoyment of learning that contributes significantly to pupils' outstanding achievement. There is no significant variation in the achievement and progress of groups of pupils because of the very effective way the school analyses progress by gender, ability and ethnicity.

Pupils' relationships with each other are excellent and they show great empathy for others. Currently, pupils are raising money for the Haiti earthquake appeal through devising their 'Helping Hands' scheme. Through this, they offer to do chores at home in return for a donation to the appeal. The marked improvement in pupils' key literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, together with their excellent moral and social development, means that they are well equipped for transfer to the junior school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1

<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.

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>
	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers' planning is excellent, especially the way in which it meets the needs of all groups of pupils in their classes. Pupils have a clear understanding of the learning intentions and what they need to do in a lesson in order to be successful. In addition, because the curriculum is relevant and meaningful, teachers enable pupils to see the point of what they learn. For example, Year 2 teachers planned an exciting and successful unit of work linked to board games. Parents were then invited to look at the games and participate in a 'Games Workshop'. As a result, pupils show great motivation and see the purpose of using a wide range of key skills to support their learning. In Year 1, the use of visitors from a bird park enthralled and captivated pupils and contributed significantly to their knowledge of living things as part of their work in science.

Teaching assistants play an invaluable role in lessons, especially in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, together with those who speak English as an additional language. They are particularly skilled in questioning and in developing pupils' key literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, they support more able groups effectively, for example in writing where the question was asked of a pupil, 'How do I know that you have used expression in your writing?'

Parents and carers feel that the school keeps their children safe. They particularly value the induction their children receive when they join Reception and the transition arrangements when leaving to join the junior school. The current initiative in Year 2 to reward pupils for good attendance is proving successful but is not adopted across the school. The school makes excellent use of outside agencies to support pupils who are vulnerable, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>1</b>
	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>

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

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<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>
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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's assertion that 'I don't do satisfactory' comes through to everyone in the school as a resonant message. It is her success in engaging all staff in a determination to succeed that is at the heart of this successful school. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous, as is the relentless focus on pupils' achievement. Teachers are left in no doubt of their accountability to the headteacher for the progress of the pupils under their care. The senior leadership team reviews in depth the progress of each class six times a year in order to eliminate any potential underachievement. Swift and determined action is taken when it is identified and immediate steps are taken, such as the use of 'Booster Groups' to support pupils in danger of falling behind. The promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils is paramount and there is no discrimination in the school.

The school is rigorous in meeting and implementing all requirements for safeguarding pupils and child protection. Staff are particularly vigilant in supervision at break and lunchtimes. The school has very effective links within its own community, including those with other partners, such as pre-schools and the junior school. The school has ambitious plans to build on the already good provision by extending and strengthening the links with other schools and institutions both nationally and internationally. However, they are not fully implemented.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>

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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with attainment that is well below expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy skills. By the end of Reception, they have made excellent progress and most work within the goals they are expected to achieve in all six areas of learning. Children enjoy being at school very much. They are very polite, friendly and welcoming, with a particular enthusiasm for showing inspectors what they are doing. Children show good levels of independence, for example when selecting their own programs on the computer. In role play, they enjoy taking turns and negotiating who does what in the kitchen, for example. They engage very well with all adults and their behaviour in activities they choose themselves and those where they work as a class or as a group with an adult is exemplary.

There are significant strengths in the teaching of letters and sounds and in developing children's skills of enquiry. In one session, there was a very strong focus on children predicting which material would be best for waterproofing the house of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Teaching assistants provide excellent support and engage in purposeful questioning with children, which contributes significantly to excellent progress in speaking and listening.

Partnerships with parents and carers and other pre-settings are excellent. Staff are rigorous in putting children's welfare at the heart of their work. Assessment of children's learning is thorough and detailed and provides detailed information for staff by gender, ability and ethnicity. Excellent use is made of the stimulating learning environment both indoors and outdoors.

The majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Many wrote positively about the way the headteacher and teachers support and care for their children. Inspectors agree with a few parents and carers that the school could do more to help them understand the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum for children in Reception. The inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns, although these were summarised and reported to the school without identifying any individual.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marnel Community Infant 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 170 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	56	49	42	5	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	82	70	34	29	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	62	53	49	42	5	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	51	53	45	2	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	69	58	46	39	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	53	47	40	8	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	49	56	47	4	3	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)	49	42	57	48	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	45	60	51	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	42	63	53	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	36	66	56	7	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	62	53	50	42	3	3	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	59	46	39	1	1	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"><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.**



5 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marnel Community Infant School, Basingstoke RG24 9PT

Thank you so much for the lovely way you greeted me and my colleagues when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you all and seeing so many wonderful things that you do. In particular, may I thank the school council for meeting my colleagues during lunchtime? I am delighted to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. These are just a few of the amazing things about your school.

- From the day you start in Reception, you make excellent progress in your learning.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you all get on really well together.
- You work hard in lessons and enjoy having targets in literacy and numeracy.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants provide you with excellent help.
- You really enjoy the topics you study and having such events as the 'Games Workshop' to which you invite your parents and carers.
- Your headteacher and teachers expect all of you to do your very best in school.

Even though you go to an outstanding school, there are two things which are needed to make it even better.

- You must all try as hard as you can to come to school every day.
- Your school governors need to make sure that the plans they have to make links with other communities in the United Kingdom and the wider world are put in place.

Keep up the good work and do your very very best to come to school each day because you really do enjoy it when you do.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis

Lead Inspector

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