

# The Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120605
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339729
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Miller

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

---

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	76
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Walton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Marston Lincolnshire
<b>Telephone number</b>	01400 250583
<b>Fax number</b>	01400 251597
<b>Email address</b>	jan.marshall@marstonthorolds.lincs.sch.uk

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Ten lessons were observed, involving all three classes and four teachers. Inspectors held meetings with the governors, staff and the school council. They talked informally with other pupils and met with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors looked at documentation including policies, development planning and self-evaluation, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. They examined minutes of governing body meetings, the headteacher's reports to the governing body, local authority reports on the school and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 50 parents and carers representing 54 pupils, and 15 members of staff. Questionnaires were distributed by the school to all pupil in Years 1 to 6, and 70 returns were received and analysed.

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

- the work the school is doing to improve further pupils' progress as they move through school from year-to-year
- the school's systems and approach to target setting to ensure suitable challenge for all groups of pupils
- the ways through which the school is developing their methods for assessing pupils' work
- whether pupils' personal development is a strength of the school.

## Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average sized school serving its local village and wider surrounding area. Most pupils are from White British ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, the large majority having specific learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Pupil mobility is high with an above average percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school during the course of any academic year. The proportion of girls attending the school is lower than average, but the balance between girls and boys varies within year groups. As part of its extended provision, the school runs a breakfast club for its pupils for an hour each morning during term time. The school holds an Activemark award, and a Basic Skills quality mark.

**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

This is a good school. Pupils, from a wide range of backgrounds, ability, and special educational needs, make good progress. Attainment on entry varies considerably year-on-year, from well-below to above average. However, the school has developed a very effective tracking system which enables it to monitor very closely each individual pupil's progress. Consequently, staff identify early and take action to help any pupils who find learning difficult. The school has a high ratio of teaching assistants; this is a deliberate investment in learning support. It ensures that those more able pupils who need extra challenge and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are enabled to achieve equally well. Pupils' targets are set and reviewed regularly; pupils are encouraged to discuss with their teachers if they feel they are meeting their targets and would like additional challenge. Pupils' personal development is outstanding, and a major strength. This is underpinned by equally excellent care, guidance and support. Behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. This contributes significantly to the school's learning ethos. As one pupil wrote, 'I would like the school to get a mark that blows the chart off the scale.'

There is outstanding leadership and excellent teamwork at all levels. A very strong community spirit runs through the school, encompassing both staff and pupils. Staff take a pride in their school, know what it is trying to achieve and feel that they are valued. Since the last inspection, this has enabled the school to maintain a good track record of academic success. In the 2009 Year 6 national tests, attainment was above average in mathematics and science and well above in English.

Reflective self-evaluation underpins a good capacity to improve. There is a sure and steady approach to whole school development. Staff prioritise carefully to maximise success, and in the past year have received training in the new national strategy for assessing pupils' progress (APP). This has been implemented successfully for reading work, and has helped teaching become more diagnostic. APP has now to be introduced fully for other aspects of literacy, and in mathematics and science.

There is increasingly good and some outstanding practice in the use of questioning during lessons to check pupils' understanding, but assessment methods are not identified consistently in lesson planning. The school is looking to sharpen its assessment strategies in tandem with a more creative approach to the curriculum. This is in order to ensure important skills and knowledge, which cross subject boundaries, are taught in ways which become increasingly meaningful for each individual pupil. Whilst good progress has been made in this, planning is not yet complete. Important improvements in resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have been made. However, further work is required to enhance ICT use across the school,

**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

and support pupils' learning at home and elsewhere.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement across the school by:-
  - ensuring that strategies for assessing pupils' progress are established fully for writing from September 2010; mathematics from the start of the spring term 2011, and science from the summer term 2011;
  - establishing a more consistent approach to using assessment in the classroom, not only to share existing good practice but also to improve lesson planning and the impact of teaching on the pupils' learning.
  - Complete, during the next academic year, the school's programme to remodel its curriculum in order to ensure that:
    - its creative, skills based learning becomes increasingly motivating and inspiring for the pupils, and tailored to meet their individual needs;
    - the school uses its new ICT facilities to enhance the curriculum in all year groups, and support the extension of pupils' learning beyond the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Attendance is high because pupils want to come to school. Broad smiles and laughter are a common currency within the school community. High levels of esteem for and awareness of others are to be found throughout the school. Pupils and staff listen carefully to each other and build effectively on each other's contributions. Such attitudes bode well for the pupils' future well-being. There is excellent cooperation within the mixed age group classes. Pupils new to the school are enabled to settle quickly into school life. Older pupils earn respect and younger pupils gain in responsibility. Consequently, pupils see no problem in working alongside others of different ages and abilities. They know their teachers have grouped them together that way to help them make the best progress. The pupils themselves know where they wish to improve further. They are looking forward to the forthcoming enterprise fortnight to help them develop further their workplace skills. The school council is working hard to help the school gain healthy schools status; there is a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Pupils know their suggestions are valued and ideas taken seriously, so they all contribute to school life.

Attainment in the current Year 2 is broadly average, but pupils have made good progress from well below expectations on entry to the Reception year. Only half of the pupils in Year 2 have been at the school since Reception, and an above average proportion require additional help with their learning. Nevertheless, they are making good progress towards their individual targets. Year 3 and 4 work exemplifies why pupils' contribution to the wider community is so good. In a citizenship discussion on general election day pupils showed, beyond their years, an understanding of national current affairs. When writing their own manifestos, there was a strong emphasis on

**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

social responsibility and aspirations for others. Pupils think beyond themselves. This extends to an international dimension through direct links with a school in Uganda and support for a project to enable access to safe drinking water. Year 6 pupils learn well and continue to achieve significant success in English, particularly in writing. Twists in stories, awareness of different styles of writing, and the good application of critical and analytical approaches when evaluating their own and others' work are at well above average levels. Pupils also learn well in mathematics and science because they are inquisitive. They enjoy thinking problems through and finding different approaches to solving them. They appreciate a good challenge.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<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>2</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>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is to be found throughout the school. Particularly outstanding practice was seen in the Year 5 and 6 class, but all teachers share good practice and this supports learning well. Typically, there is a good pace to lessons and pupils' interest is maintained throughout. Teaching ensures pupils have fun in learning because they are challenged well by interesting work, which is matched well to their different stages of

<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.

**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

learning. The aim of a lesson is usually made very clear, and classes discuss what they will need to do to ensure success. However, teaching is not always consistent in identifying the ways pupils' learning will be assessed, and sometimes this is missing from actual lesson planning. Nevertheless, practical marking is good, regular and ensures individual pupils know what they need to do to improve.

The school has considered thoroughly its curriculum. It is working productively on new national initiatives to develop a more creative curriculum matched increasingly closely to pupils' individual needs and interests. There is a good focus on key subject skills, and the teaching often makes good links between subjects. This raises pupils' awareness and enables them to use their skills in different contexts. Planning for the full implementation of these developments is due to be completed by the end of the next academic year. The school is on course to achieve this. The curriculum is enhanced well through extra-curricular clubs and school trips and visits. Gardening club is very popular and enhances very well pupils' eco-awareness.

The school is very attentive to the care, and support of its pupils. Pastoral care is particularly strong. Pupils feel entirely safe; their biggest concerns related to the occasional bee and stinging nettles. The school council is adamant that there is no bullying, and discord is rare. Pupils feel secure because, as one stated, 'The staff are always kind.' There are good partnerships established with a range of agencies, and the local authority, to support both pupils and their families. Partnership links with other similarly small schools, through the area's village cluster, enables the school to provide a range of services it would not be able to afford individually. Through this partnership, the school has been leading provision for gifted and/or talented pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has earned the respect and appreciation of pupils and staff alike. Working relationships within the school are excellent. Strong teamwork ensures the mutual support which underpins very firmly the school's ambition to drive up standards in all aspects of its life and work. Each child is acknowledged as an individual with their own potential. This reflects the way the school places equality of opportunity at the heart of its work, and explains the high aspirations of all staff. The regular monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders is effective, but opportunities for teachers to observe and peer-assess each other are not yet as frequent. Nevertheless, there are

**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

effective partnerships for the support and training of both student and graduate teachers at the school. This reflects well the school's strong commitment to life-long education in its widest sense.

Improvements in governance since the last inspection have ensured good links with the school. Governors now hold the school closely to account and play their part well in supporting the school. Systems and procedures for safeguarding children are robust, and there is a comprehensive awareness of related issues amongst governors and staff. The inspection found a couple of minor administrative errors, which were quickly resolved when brought to the school's attention. The school itself is a most cohesive community, and because of this the day-to-day awareness of risks, on the part of both staff and pupils, is never taken for granted. The school has undertaken an analysis of its role within, and responsibilities towards, its community. Its consequent action plan has been incorporated successfully into whole school development planning. The school is now looking to fine-tune the pupils' appreciation of difference and diversity by extending further its international links.

*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	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>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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during their Reception year. There are also excellent links with the local pre-school provider, which benefit children well when they transfer into Reception. The current group of children entered the school with overall development below expectations, but the large majority are now achieving standards which prepare them well for the National Curriculum. They benefit well from being able to mix with the



**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

older Year 1 and 2 pupils in the same class. There are good opportunities for children to be challenged by, and attempt, more advanced work if they show the inclination or aptitude. Work is therefore planned well to meet their needs. There is good support from teaching assistants, including for any children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Resources are good and the Early Years Foundation Stage is managed well. Assessment is good, and detailed record files show the rate and scope of the children's development. This stems from regular monitoring and observations on the part of both the teacher and teaching assistants. Adults know and understand pupils' individual needs well. There are currently no Reception year children using the breakfast club, but this facility is placed well to support their needs.

There is a good balance, throughout the day, of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Inside and outside areas are used very effectively. There are plenty of opportunities for healthy exercise. The setting provides children with a wide variety of interesting opportunities for learning. This ranges from formal literacy work, to creative play when going on a word hunt or fishing for letters in the wet play area. Children were fascinated by science work when looking at food through a magnifying glass. This was very good for extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children become self-confident, motivated, and are eager to learn.

*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 number of questionnaires returned represented the large majority of pupils and carers, and the very large majority of families. A few responses to some questions were left blank, particularly concerning the preparation of pupils for their future. This mainly reflected the youngest children who have at least a year to go before moving from Key Stage 1 to 2. The inspection finds the practical transition arrangements between classes are excellent. Only one return disagreed with any of the questions. Inspectors agree with the overwhelming majority of families that they are well-informed about their children's progress and receive good help and advice from the school. This helps them support their children's learning. One parent wrote: 'The school has not only given my children the best opportunity in life, it has also helped me to improve their education.'

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	72	15	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	80	11	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	65	18	33	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	67	18	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	76	13	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	67	17	31	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	69	16	30	0	0	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)	36	67	13	24	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	74	12	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	67	18	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	72	13	24	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	69	17	31	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	81	10	19	0	0	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.**



10 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England School, Lincolnshire,  
NG32 2HQ

Wherever you are when you read this letter, I want you to think back to your excellent celebration assembly on the last day of the inspection. Your headteacher provided a 'special chair', and some of you took turns to sit on it and talk about things which are special to you. I would like you to sit back comfortably whilst I tell you why I think you are all special, and why yours is such a good school.

Your attendance at school is high, and you have fun whilst you learn.

You have good teachers who help and support you well in your learning.

You have made good progress by the time you reach the end of Year 6.

The school helps you to grow and develop very well indeed as young citizens.

You make an excellent contribution to the school community and school life.

Your teachers, and other adults at the school, take very good care of you.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors, lead your school very well.

Like you, your teachers are constantly looking for ways to help you learn better and achieve even more than you do now. I have asked them to do two things. First, to complete the work they have started to improve how they assess your work and record the progress you make. The second is to finish the work they have started to enrich the things you learn. They will do this by helping you to develop further your individual skills and the links you make between subjects. Your teachers will also be promoting additional ways for you to make use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support and extend your learning.

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into your school. One of your classes has a charter which states, 'We promise to help each other and look after each other.' Please continue to honour this charter and you won't go far wrong in life.

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**