

# Marion-Cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121632
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339984
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Gill

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr B Smyth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marie-Louise Thirlaway
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Reas Lane Marion-Cum-Grafton Boroughbridge YO51 9QB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 322355
<b>Fax number</b>	01423 325840
<b>Email address</b>	admin@marion-cum-grafton.n-yorks.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including all matters related to safeguarding, the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress, the work pupils were doing in their books and the questionnaires completed by parents, pupils and staff.

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

- whether standards are above average by the end of Year 6, given the sometimes very small cohorts concerned
- pupils' learning and progress to see if they were at least good in lessons, and from key stage to key stage
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the impact of leadership and management since the school's last inspection.

## Information about the school

Marton-cum-Grafton is a small village school with a rising roll over the last three years. A very low proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. There are low numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, none of whom speaks English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Generally, very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a class for Reception children. A number of pupils, more than is typical nationally, join part-way through their education. Since the last inspection, the school has begun a building project to extend its accommodation. As a result, during the inspection, outside play space was restricted. The school has gained various awards that include Quality Marks for Basic Skills and Inclusion, and the Healthy School Award.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Marton-cum-Grafton is a good school. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. It has maintained this level of performance, and improved on it in some cases, since the school's last inspection in 2007, despite disruption caused by the major building work. The vast majority of parents and carers subscribe to the view that this is a 'fantastic little school'. Inspection findings agree with their enthusiasm, particularly since pupils' behaviour and their involvement in school and its local community are outstanding. These are outcomes produced by the school's extremely caring atmosphere, superb links with parents and the leading role it plays in a cluster of local schools.

A main strength of the school is the deep-seated understanding of, and regard for, individual pupils and their families. The capacity for the school to improve further is good, as demonstrated by the leaders' clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the progress made in assessment since 2007 and the maintenance of the school's reputation locally, which has caused the number of pupils on roll to rise significantly of late.

Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6, which represents good progress from pupils' individual starting points. Results and pupils' progress vary from year-to-year owing to the sometimes very small groups involved and the length of time pupils have spent at the school. Nevertheless, there are some minor differences in the rates of progress between subjects. Progress in reading is often excellent, in writing it is good but, by contrast, in mathematics it is occasionally satisfactory. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and implemented some measures to tackle it. However, it is too soon to see any advances in progress over time or higher standards. Thorough assessments of pupils' work have played their part in raising standards, particularly in writing. These assessments are then translated well into guidance for pupils about their next steps in learning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is often very good, but their cultural understanding is restricted because they are not able to interact with pupils, within the United Kingdom, who come from different ethnic groups and have faiths other than Christianity. Pupils are beginning to gain an international perspective on these matters by fund raising for a child in Cambodia, but their local terms of reference lack breadth.

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

- Improve standards and the rate of progress in mathematics by:
  - making sure that skills in the subject are practised across the curriculum

- ensuring that all higher attainers receive challenging problems to solve.
- Increase pupils' first-hand understanding of other religions and minority ethnic groups within the United Kingdom by:
  - providing pupils with first-hand experiences of other faiths and minority ethnic groups.

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

**2**

In lessons pupils behave especially well. They share their ideas with confidence, listen to others with interest and are very polite to adults. Enthusiasm for learning underpins their responses in lessons. Just occasionally, in literacy, some boys switch off momentarily when there is too much listening as opposed to practical activity. Some pupils respond really well in mathematics to being placed with the year group above their own. This gives them confidence and helps to fulfill their obvious talents. Generally, but not always, higher attainers are spurred on well by challenges that extend their thinking. For example, in one lesson a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 were fascinated by the task of drawing pie-charts with protractors, which is work usually reserved for the secondary school.

Pupils' good progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is represented by the above average attainment at the end of Year 6. Moreover, records in school show that very small year groups of three or four pupils make good progress in a way that published statistics fail to reveal. The pupils who arrive part-way through a key stage make good progress because they are so quickly assimilated into the school's culture of ambition. Sometimes attainment is high, such as in the current Year 6 where pupils are already reaching well above expected levels for their age, particularly in English.

Pupils feel safe, adopt healthy lifestyles and develop personal qualities that equip them well in the future. Sometimes these aspects are limited by temporary factors, such as the very tight outside space in which to play, or by merely average attendance which results mainly from holidays taken in term time. Opportunities to work on the school council, to be house captains, join fund raising groups or become playground friends, mean that pupils' contribution within school is excellent. Furthermore, they play a significant role in local community and parish affairs.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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**

<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>2</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Good teaching provides relevant learning for the wide range of age and ability in each class. Teachers are helped well by teaching assistants who make sure that pupils receive the support they need. Productive subject knowledge is used effectively to advance learning. For example, pupils' progress in writing is at least good because skills are not only developed well in terms of vocabulary, sentence construction and punctuation, but also practised thoroughly across the curriculum. Pupils invariably cite history as a favourite subject owing to the fact that their local studies allow them to write, with conviction, about matters close to their experience. By contrast, their skills in mathematics are not developed across the curriculum to quite the same degree. Moreover, while in mathematics some higher attainers are given challenging activities to stretch their abilities in problem solving, this is not always the case in every lesson.

Assessment is used well as a tool for finding out what pupils can do and what they need to do next. Tasks are devised after taking pupils' previous achievement into account. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils prosper well in all lessons, including music and French, and in the many after-school clubs, all of which add variety to the good curriculum. The high quality care that pupils receive makes a major contribution to their development. In this small school, pupils are known exceedingly well as individuals and the work undertaken to facilitate the progress of those facing challenging circumstances, including any with disabilities, is enormous.

*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>2</b>
	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?

Effective leadership is undertaken by the headteacher, governors and the entire team of staff. Responsibilities are distributed well and, as a result, everyone joins in well in reviewing the school's practice and planning for the future. The headteacher has skillfully motivated the team to concentrate on the right aspects for improvement. Consequently, since 2007, this good school has improved its methods of assessment, provision for community cohesion and collaboration with other schools to good effect. Equality of opportunity and the tackling of discrimination are promoted well, despite relative differences of attainment and progress between pupils' reading, mathematics and writing. The good procedures for safeguarding pupils are signs of the effective collaboration between governors, staff and pupils. The obvious family atmosphere in school is extended by the many ties with the local community. Pupils collaborate with their peers within the local cluster of schools. They are gaining an international perspective through learning French and finding out more about Cambodia and the places in the world, which benefit from their fund raising. The curriculum provides good opportunities to study issues about faith and ethnicity but pupils, as yet, lack first-hand experiences.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	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>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>

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

<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>
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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter school with typical levels of attainment for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage often reaching above typical levels by the end of the year. They settle in immediately because the two teachers and the teaching assistant work extremely well with parents and carers to make it easy for children to learn with confidence. Moreover, the balance between being taught knowledge and skills directly and developing these skills through freely chosen play is well managed. For example, after a valuable class discussion about Firework night, children undertook a wide variety of productive activities, including note taking about food required for the bonfire party, which developed their skills through play. Their progress in personal development is swift owing to the positive relationships that exist and the ample opportunities to share and play together. Reading is advancing very well of late owing to the valuable use of the nationally recommended scheme of teaching letters and their sounds. By contrast, progress in the calculation aspect of mathematics is not quite so rapid. This is because there are fewer opportunities for children to practise skills during the sessions devoted to self-directed play. Photographs show that outdoor play usually provides a broad range of opportunities for learning, similar to those indoors. Provision is tailored to suit children's needs and achievements are carefully recorded in ways that identify next steps in learning. Good leadership and management of the setting enhance children's learning and guarantee a successful transition into Key Stage 1.

*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 vast majority of parents and carers who responded, which was virtually all of the total possible, were very satisfied and happy with the school, seeing it as successful academically and in caring very well for their children's personal well-being. Very few questionnaires contained concerns. However, some parents and carers expressed concern about the progress their children make, and how well prepared they are for the future. These concerns are recognised by the inspection team in their recommendations



for improvement.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marton-Cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	57	20	41	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	67	15	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	53	21	43	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	47	20	41	5	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	51	22	45	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	41	26	53	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	55	20	41	1	2	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)	22	45	15	31	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	49	18	37	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	49	23	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	45	26	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	49	25	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	53	21	43	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 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.**



06 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marton-Cum-Grafton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,  
York, YO51 9QB

Thank you for your help when my colleague and I visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you. It was obvious to see why you think lessons are full of fun and that adults take very good care of you. I thought some of you summed it up well when you said, 'Marton is a nice place to be because everyone can tell the staff their ideas and work gets more challenging each year.'

You go to a good school with some outstanding aspects. The standards you reach by the end of Year 6 are above average. That means you make good progress from the points at which you join the school. Some things are really special, such as your behaviour and the way that you contribute to school life and the local community. Adults care for you very well, which is what you told me, and links with your parents and other schools are extremely beneficial for your education.

You certainly have a healthy outlook, are free from bullying and take part in lessons with enthusiasm. I was impressed by the very many activities you can do, such as rugby, residential trips, extra music, French and your charity fundraising for, among other things, a child in Cambodia.

I know everyone at Marton-cum-Grafton wants to do even better and I have asked your school to do two things to improve. Your teachers need to make sure that you progress and attain at least as well in mathematics as you do in reading and writing. They also need to make sure that you get a chance to experience, at first-hand, what life is like for children, in the United Kingdom, who have a different faith from yours and come from other ethnic communities.

You can all help by grasping new challenges in mathematics and becoming even more fascinated in the diversity of our society.

Thank you once again and best wishes.

Mr Roger Gill

Lead inspector

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