

St Margaret's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125667
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	340814
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth Westbrook

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Suffern
Headteacher	Alan Jones
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2006
School address	Coppice Road Whitnash Leamington Spa
Telephone number	01926 426216
Fax number	01926 450647
Email address	admin3157@we-learn.com

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors spoke informally to some parents at the start and end of the school day. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at improvement plans, key policy documents, assessment information, governors' minutes and pupils' work. Safeguarding procedures were also checked. In addition, 232 responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaire were received and analysed along with questionnaires from staff and from pupils.

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

- how effectively the school tracks pupils' progress and whether expectations of progress are high enough
- how well teachers use assessment to plan for the different needs of groups within the class
- the effectiveness of plans to raise attainment in writing
- how well leaders at all levels evaluate the quality of provision and the impact of initiatives to improve it.

Information about the school

This is a large junior school with three classes in each year group. The majority of pupils come from White British families. About one third of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic groups with most of these from Indian families. There are almost a quarter of pupils for whom English is not the first language, but none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.

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

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving because there is a strong commitment within from all staff and governors to raise pupils' achievement. All the adults in the school take good care of the pupils, promoting good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development so that all aspects of pupils' personal development are good or better. A family ethos and warm relationships between all members of the community help pupils to feel extremely safe and happy within the school. As one parent commented, 'The staff all go out of their way to ensure the safety and well-being of the children. We can't praise them enough.'

Attainment fell to average in 2008, but standards of attainment in 2009 and those seen during the inspection are above average. Pupils make the progress expected of them in relation to their starting points, but it is uneven. Progress in reading is good, but in writing, it is satisfactory with too few pupils reaching the higher level of attainment. A number of strategies have been introduced since the last inspection to improve standards in writing. These are beginning to raise attainment, but have not been in place long enough for their full impact on writing to be felt. The inspection found that there are missed opportunities within all subjects to challenge pupils to write at length and practise different skills and styles of expression. The assessment of writing has improved, particularly in Year 6, but elsewhere, does not always give sufficient detail on what has been written well and further steps to take for improvement.

In those areas which have been a focus of self-evaluation, leaders have a clear picture of the school's effectiveness, and have taken action to promote improvement. However, the school is not checking thoroughly enough across all areas of its work. This has led to variability in the quality of provision and unevenness in outcomes for pupils.

Nevertheless, leaders have demonstrated that their actions can bring about improvement as evidenced by the raised attainment in all subjects in 2009. This indicates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Improving the quality of teaching has been a primary focus in the school's plans to raise attainment and achievement. A number of strategies introduced, such as sharing with pupils the intention of the lesson and how they will be able to measure success, are well-established and promote better learning. However, there are still inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching and use of assessment, particularly in planning to ensure that lessons meet the needs of the full range of abilities within the class.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in writing by ensuring that:

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- pupils have regular opportunities to write at length
- pupils are given detailed feedback on what they have written well and their next steps to improve their writing
- opportunities are carefully planned within the curriculum so that pupils can practise their skills and different styles of writing across all subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills at all levels for accurate and thorough self-evaluation to ensure that actions taken to bring about improvement have a consistently strong impact in all areas
 - identifying and sharing the good practice within the school.
- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and use of assessment by making sure that teachers use assessment information to plan activities in lessons which meet the full range of abilities within each class.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average. At the end of Year 6, it is above average in mathematics and English. The progress pupils make and the quality of their learning is satisfactory rather than good because it is uneven. When pupils are actively involved in a task or discussion, their learning accelerates. This was observed during the inspection when Year 3 pupils made good progress in their understanding of the language of puns by unpicking the riddles in a poem. Pupils had a clear understanding of their task and set to work busily, enjoying the interaction with others which boosted their learning. In the minority of lessons where teachers expect pupils to work on the same task at the same pace, or when teachers talk for too long or do not expect all members of the class to make a contribution, the pace of learning slows. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and most are keen to participate. A small minority of pupils, usually girls, are reluctant to contribute in whole-class activities by reading or answering questions and they miss out on opportunities to extend their learning. Pupils respond well to individual tasks and challenges and work well independently when they have the opportunity.

Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school and their classes, and they are very willing to do this as playleaders, monitors and school councillors. They enjoy contributing to the local hospice and care home by performing their plays and fundraising for a number of charities, and supporting the education of a Ugandan girl. Pupils' above average attendance and attainment ensure that they are well-prepared for the future. This is aided by good interpersonal and communication skills, as pupils demonstrate in responses in group and paired work. Pupils have a good understanding of what makes a healthy diet. They participate well in games and clubs and are very active at breaktimes. Pupils have a highly developed awareness of how to

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keep and be safe. All groups feel safe because, as one boy with special educational needs commented, 'People look after each other.' Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to use new technology safely. They were able to share with inspectors how they had kept themselves and others safe on their recent residential visit.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Whilst there are examples of good and outstanding teaching, it is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, it is because planning builds on previous learning and meets the needs of different abilities within the class. Planning takes account of how all adults in the classroom will support the next steps for individual pupils so that teaching assistants can play an active role. Where teaching is satisfactory, planning is less effective in meeting the needs of different pupils and does not take account of what pupils have learnt before. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always as high as they should be. Recently, there has been a strong focus on developing the use of assessment so that pupils' progress accelerates. This work is having a positive

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

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impact. There are examples of teachers using marking to give clear feedback to pupils on their work and tips for improvement which many pupils act on. The quality of this is variable, so that some pupils have less information than they need to make good progress in, for example, reaching the highest level in writing.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities with good take-up from all groups of pupils. Through visits, theme weeks and visitors, a broad range of enrichment experiences are enjoyed by pupils and contribute well to their good personal development and well-being. The school is developing a themed curriculum which has been piloted in Year 4 this year. The opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills in all areas of the curriculum are currently satisfactory and good in information and communication technology (ICT). Plans are in place to enhance the use of these skills through the themed curriculum as it is rolled out across the school from September. Some good examples were seen during the inspection of pupils using writing skills for a particular purpose, such as letters to persuade councillors not to go ahead with a building programme in their locality. However, the planning of these opportunities is inconsistent across classes.

The support and care for pupils with particular needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the range of activities of the school, including residential visits. There are clear classroom management strategies which are used well by staff and contribute to pupils' good behaviour in and around school. Productive partnerships are established with a number of external organisations, both to support pupils' development and the curriculum. The school's closer working relationship with its main feeder school is increasing awareness of the attainment of pupils either side of transition.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Improvement plans are adequate and focus on appropriate developments. The monitoring and evaluation of their implementation is not systematic enough to bring about sustained improvement. For example, the quality of interventions for underachieving pupils observed during the inspection was variable. Leaders have an accurate picture of the progress which individual pupils make towards their targets. These are set at a challenging level. The termly progress meetings between senior leaders and class teachers are effective in identifying pupils who are underachieving.

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The school has relevant information about the groups of pupils it serves. Where action has been targeted there has been improvement, for example, in introducing strategies to improve boys' writing. However, the monitoring of the implementation of the school's equal opportunities policy is not rigorous enough to bring about improvement across the board.

Members of the governing body are a committed group, bringing a range of experiences to the school. Many are closely involved in work with staff and pupils and gain a clear insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Policies and procedures are in place, but the monitoring of the implementation of policies is inconsistent. Safeguarding is monitored well. Governors ensure that pupils and staff are safe through procedures which are reviewed regularly. Thorough procedures have been introduced recently to ensure safe use of ICT and have raised awareness very effectively with pupils and parents. Community cohesion is promoted well within the school and through its strong links within the local community. Plans are being developed to extend engagement with communities farther afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The vast majority were entirely positive. This comment sums up the views of parents and carers shared in the questionnaire and with inspectors at the school; 'All the staff are so helpful and caring, always going that extra mile.' The few concerns expressed by parents and carers were largely to do with pupils' behaviour and the amount and quality

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of homework. Inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be good. The quality and amount of homework seen during the inspection was found to be satisfactory. The headteacher agreed to review the concerns expressed by parents about homework.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret's CofE Junior 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 232 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 352 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	121	52	107	46	3	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	147	63	83	36	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	90	39	125	54	13	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	103	44	121	52	5	2	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	121	52	104	45	2	1	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	97	42	126	54	8	3	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	105	45	124	53	2	1	1	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)	108	47	115	50	7	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	102	44	120	52	6	3	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	88	38	120	52	15	6	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	30	142	61	12	5	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	113	49	112	48	2	1	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	126	54	101	44	4	2	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). 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

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



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret's CofE Junior School, Leamington Spa, CV31 2JF

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly on our recent inspection of your school. I would like to share with you what we learned about the school. It gives you a satisfactory standard of education.

You make satisfactory progress in your work and reach standards which are above average by the time you leave.

Your headteacher and staff look after you well and because of that you feel extremely safe and happy in school. You trust the adults in school and know they will help you if you need it. You behave well towards each other.

You enjoy school very much which is why you attend well. You enjoy lessons more when you are active and doing things with others, but many of you also work well independently. You told us how much you value the wide range of opportunities which your school gives you and particularly how you enjoyed the residential visit to Wales. It was good to see how much everybody enjoyed the year 6 end of year production.

You are all willing to take on responsibilities through school council, environment club and as monitors. We were impressed by the amounts of money you raise to help others and your support for children in other countries.

You know how to keep healthy and are active at breaktimes to help you do this.

So that the school continues to improve, we are asking the adults in charge to check carefully how well the school is doing and on the progress you are making. We are also asking them to help some of you make more progress in your writing. This will be done by showing you where you have written well and the next steps you need to take and by giving you opportunities to practise your writing skills as often as possible. We are also asking your teachers to make sure that activities in lessons match your ability so that you do not find them too easy or too hard. We hope that you will help your headteacher and his staff put these plans in place by working hard and doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Westbrook

Lead inspector

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