

Marish Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134651
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	341489
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	David Collard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	664
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Robin Grayson
Headteacher	Rachel Morgan (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons, and held meetings with the staff, pupils, governors, local authority personnel and the school improvement partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of pupils' books, assessment data and policies. They analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff and 100 parents.

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

- whether, after low standards in national tests in recent years, the variations in pupils' attainment and progress have improved this year and whether teaching is consistently strong throughout the school
- whether the improvement areas identified by the school are the correct priorities to overcome underachievement in the past
- whether, since the last inspection, the school is providing a sufficiently good quality of education to ensure that pupils make up lost ground in each year.

Information about the school

This very large primary school serves its local area. There is a wide range of ethnic diversity, with pupils coming from 44 different ethnic backgrounds and speaking 29 different languages. The two largest groups, at approximately 30% each, are from a White British or Asian background. The school has Nursery classes. The Reception classes also take children from an attached Sure Start Centre in the school grounds, which is managed separately. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The headteacher retired in the summer of 2009. A new headteacher has been appointed but will not take up post until September 2010. In the interim, one of the deputy headteachers has become an acting headteacher and another deputy headteacher has been seconded from a local primary school. The school has gained the Healthy School award.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The realistic analysis and self-evaluation provided recently by the acting headteacher identified the right improvement areas. However, the resulting strategy for tackling these areas of weakness is at an early stage. While there are early signs of improvement particularly in English, it is not yet sufficient to overcome three years of inadequate progress and low attainment for the pupils leaving at the end of Year 6. Too much relies on the leadership of one or two individuals; other leaders are only now being trained to further develop their expertise.

Through the satisfactory monitoring of teaching, weaknesses are being tackled and the effect of this can be seen in the calm and orderly atmosphere in classrooms and the good behaviour during lessons. Nevertheless, too many groups of pupils are still underachieving. Most notably, there is underachievement in some individual year groups and also more widely in mathematics. This is because teaching, while generally satisfactory in individual lessons, is not consistently good enough over the longer term to ensure all pupils make up lost ground. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily because of the support they receive. Pupils from minority ethnic groups including those who speak English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily. Outcomes for pupils' personal development and some aspects of the school's provision also have strengths. Pupils know well how to lead healthy lifestyles and keep safe. There are good procedures to support the care and welfare of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Nevertheless, attendance is below the national average.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start but results over recent years show that their good progress is not sustained in Key Stages 1 and 2, reflecting inadequate teaching. Despite recent improvements, some work is still not sufficiently challenging for pupils at all levels of ability. The development of pupils' skills is not based securely on what has gone before and teachers do not use marking and target setting to help move on learning. However, some teaching is good and this has been helped by some new teaching appointments. As a consequence, pupils are making better progress in English, especially writing, but this is not fully embedded throughout the school. In mathematics, teaching is not strong enough and this is a key reason why standards have not improved significantly.

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Staff and governors at the school recognise there is more to do. However, achievement has been too low for too long and many of the improvements are very recent. There has been too little time for the improvements to have had a clear impact on pupils' academic endeavours. Added to this, the school's leadership, based on a structure that has been in place for less than one term does not demonstrate the capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2010, raise the standards in English and mathematics in Year 2 so that at least 80% of pupils achieve the age expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics, and in Year 6, at least 65% of pupils achieve the age-expected levels in English and mathematics combined, by:
 - identifying pupils who are underachieving and providing rigorous support for them
 - ensuring that teachers and leaders regularly monitor all pupils' progress and adapt their lessons accordingly
 - providing focused subject training for staff, especially in mathematics, to help raise the level of challenge for pupils.
- Ensure pupils in all year groups are making consistently good progress by teachers:
 - providing good levels of challenge in all lessons
 - using assessment data well to refine the planning of every lesson in the light of what has gone before
 - telling pupils clearly what they have learnt, what they need to do next and how to go about it.
- Develop the expertise of all leaders so that they can play a full and active role in whole-school developments and thus raise pupils' achievement.
- Take steps to raise the level of attendance to the national average level by March 2011.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Observations of lessons and the work in pupils' books confirm an uneven pattern of learning across different year groups and standards that are too low. Challenging targets have been set for the current Year 6, but even if they are achieved, pupils' standards would represent no better than satisfactory progress from Year 2. Children learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but this good start is not built upon in later year groups. For example, one class of pupils were not challenged by the number work they were doing as they had successfully completed similar work the previous day. In another lesson, the work relied heavily on the input by the teacher and then all pupils were given the same task to complete, regardless of their ability. More positively, pupils' skills in information and communication technology, music and physical education are being built upon satisfactorily. However, without good basic skills, particularly in

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numeracy, pupils are not being prepared well enough for life in the wider world. The robust systems and support for pupils with special educational needs means they make satisfactory progress. In their individual education plans, this group have tight, small steps they are expected to achieve and so move on. Pupils from Asian and Indian backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, also do noticeably better than other pupils partly because of the additional support that some of them receive. Personal development is a more positive aspect. Pupils are proud of their school. In the questionnaire completed by most pupils in Years 3 to 6, they are overwhelmingly positive about how much they enjoy school. Comments such as, 'My school never leaves anyone out and everyone matters' are typical. High participation rates in sports and pupils' choices of the delicious and nutritious lunches all confirm the good healthy lifestyles that are developing. One pupil even questioned an inspector about whether he had put salt on his meal because 'too much is not good for you'. Pupils are polite; they open doors for visitors and talk avidly about what they have been doing. Behaviour in lessons is good, and when teaching is at its best, pupils concentrate so hard that there is not a sound. Behaviour at other times is not as good. Only half the pupils' questionnaires remark positively about behaviour, which is clearly not as good when pupils are not directly supervised. The school follows up absences rigorously but a small proportion of pupils still do not attend regularly, and levels of attendance have been low for at least two years. Pupils enjoy contributing to activities within their local community, although they do not have enough opportunities to develop their independence by instigating these activities more widely.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

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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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for the pupils and looks after and cares for them well. The curriculum is enhanced by a good number of extra activities such as the breakfast club, music tuition and visits. For example, the school and the sports coach successfully achieved their objective of winning the local athletics competition this year with a high number of participants. In lessons, teachers try to use exciting activities to entice pupils to use their skills, such as a recent role play of a 'robbery' of the Marish Cup. As a result, pupils say that they find 'learning fun'. Not all these opportunities extend pupils' learning. For example, pupils talked enthusiastically about an experiment at the beginning of term to shoot gas from a fizzy-drink bottle. However, they could not explain why they conducted this experiment or what they were trying to find out. When this happens, learning is not consolidated or extended because pupils are unclear about the reasons for the lesson. Teachers have developed behaviour management techniques that are consistently applied. This ensures all lessons run smoothly. However, because teachers talk for too long without moving on to an activity, this is sometimes at the expense of pupils working independently or using knowledge that they have previously acquired. Planning has been improved and provides a framework to improve standards, especially in writing. Some teachers do not interpret this planning well enough so pupils at different levels of ability are insufficiently challenged by what they are asked to do. In contrast, planning does work well when teachers give a clear indication about what each group will learn, which is then further developed through individual targets. In mathematics, targets are too broad, and in some other subjects there is little evidence of any useful marking. All these aspects of teaching are too variable and so fail to provide the consistency in learning that is needed to get pupils' achievement back on track.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

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This is a school where pupils have been underachieving for some time; standards have not been high enough and teaching has relied too heavily on raising attainment in the latter years of each key stage. The acting headteacher, setting high expectations for the future, has been instrumental in making significant changes to the day-to-day teaching and quality of provision. However, the improvements made are mostly very recent, and do not reflect an orchestrated strategy for raising standards across the whole school. The use of results from the monitoring of teaching and learning is beginning to make teachers accountable for the progress of their class. As part of this process, the recently introduced progress meetings are starting to ensure that pupils at risk of further underachievement are being targeted. This is also making sure the school is taking appropriate steps to ensure equality of opportunity because information has been analysed about different groups of pupils. Improvement is already evident in some areas such as writing. However, while the senior leadership team is developing its effectiveness in some areas, the role of other leaders and managers is at an early stage of development and too much responsibility is left to too few. While there is some good teaching, some remains barely satisfactory and overall it is not good enough to overcome the legacy of underachievement.

The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities, including through good safeguarding arrangements. They are aware of what needs changing and along with this are working on building on their completed analysis about community cohesion to ensure pupils are developing an understanding of local, national and global diversity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
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	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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Children settle into school routines well, and good transition arrangements between home and school mean that teachers have a clear idea of what to provide for each individual. Joint planning ensures there is a wide range of activities available that cover all the areas of learning for children of this age. For example, children are keen and able to use the computers and share toys with each other and are able to take turns. Relationships between staff, parents and the children are particularly strong. Ongoing and regular assessment supports this planning and enables consistent tracking to be undertaken and any difficulties to be dealt with quickly. This includes good support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many children at an early stage of learning English have the benefit of home language speakers and other external support should they need it. There are good arrangements for pupils' welfare such as for hygiene.. Children in both the Nursery and Reception Year are able to choose whether to play inside or out and all areas are well resourced. The outdoor provision in the Reception classes is better than that for the Nursery, as the younger children do not always have good opportunities to link their play activities while learning about communication, language and number work.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Most parents feel that, overall, they are happy with their child's experience at the school. There are many positive comments and parents are generally satisfied with the way their children are looked after, kept safe and healthy. Most are happy with the quality of leadership and the lines of communication and feel the school is approachable. A few parents feel that teaching and behaviour could be improved, and that they would like more information about how well their child is doing at school. While the proportion of returned questionnaires is relatively low, these views are generally supported by the inspection evidence.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marish 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 664 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	48	48	48	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	53	53	51	51	4	4	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	43	51	51	4	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	38	50	50	6	6	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	42	42	52	52	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	33	57	57	10	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	38	56	56	2	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)	19	19	62	62	8	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	21	64	64	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	18	61	61	10	10	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	20	62	62	7	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	31	62	62	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	38	53	53	6	6	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">■ 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.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marish Primary School, Slough SL3 8NZ

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing all about your school. We were especially impressed with how polite you were and how well you behaved in lessons. While some things are good, we have said that most of you could make more progress and reach higher standards. To ensure this happens, we have said that your school requires 'special measures'. As I promised some of you, I have written the main points of our report below.

- You told us that you thought behaviour in lessons was good but at some other times just one or two children spoilt it for the others. We saw some really good behaviour in the lessons we went into and sometimes we could hear a pin drop when you were working. The same thing happened at lunchtime. However, you must make all sure everybody is on their best behaviour when there are not any adults around.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start. They play and learn well together. In the rest of the school, you told us you enjoy your lessons. Your teachers plan some interesting activities for you. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all these lessons provide really challenging things to do so that you all make the highest levels of progress. Unfortunately, a number of you are still not doing well enough by the time you leave Marish, especially in mathematics, so you will all need to work hard to ensure that everybody makes really good progress.
- You are looked after well and there is the right amount of support for those of you who find learning difficult. Some of you showed us your targets that you are working on. These are better in English than in mathematics so again we have asked that these are improved.
- Your headteacher and other staff have worked hard to make sure that your progress improves. We have asked all the leaders to play their part in this. However, there is a lot to do so we have placed the school in 'special measures'. To help it to improve inspectors will be coming back regularly to check on the progress being made by the school.

We wish you success for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Collard

Lead inspector

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