

Marlborough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102186
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	355141
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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	4–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Ward
Headteacher	Christopher McDermott
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 17 teachers, observed 33 lessons and held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan and those of subject departments, minutes of governors' meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition to a scrutiny of pupils' work, staff and pupils' questionnaires and 84 parental/carer questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of initiatives, such as 'Narrowing the gap,' in supporting specific ethnic groups.
- The effectiveness of other interventions to support different groups of pupils.
- The quality of provision and learning in science at Key Stage 2.
- The quality of learning and provision in writing for more-able pupils at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

Marlborough Primary School is larger than average. The numbers of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average. A few of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average and the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. Pupils' needs range from moderate learning difficulties to behavioural, emotional and social, and speech, language and communication. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Mobility of pupils is very high. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the two Reception classes for up to 60 children. There is a breakfast and after-school club. This provision is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately. The school has gained the International Award, Activemark, FMSIS and the Healthy Schools 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Marlborough Primary School is an outstanding school where pupils achieve well and thoroughly enjoy learning. A shared vision results in a vibrant ethos and strong commitment from everyone to provide each pupil with the best possible education. Parents and carers and pupils appreciate the high-quality care and exciting learning opportunities. Parents and carers summed up the views of the large majority saying: 'We are proud that our children attend Marlborough. It is an outstanding school. Parents and carers are always welcome and children are very happy. They have had really positive experiences and have gained enormously from the support and work of this dedicated team. The teachers and support staff are amazing and the school is led by a brilliant headteacher and deputy.' The pupils were equally enthusiastic about their school saying, 'Learning is great, the school listen to our ideas and are always open to suggestions to try to stretch you and you can always tell the teachers if the work has not been challenging enough. The headteacher is firm and fair.' These are the key strengths of the school:

- The pupils make excellent gains in their personal development because relationships are extremely strong and the school ethos is very warm and welcoming.
- Progress is good because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better. All groups of pupils make good or better progress because the quality of support and intervention strategies is so successful.
- The success of initiatives and interventions to support different groups of pupils, including specific ethnic groups.
- There has been very good progress in improving the provision for mathematics, science at Key Stage 2 and writing for the more able throughout the school. Many initiatives are now successfully embedded and making a positive impact on the pupils' progress in these subjects.
- The pupils feel extremely safe because they are totally confident any concerns will be dealt with effectively by the staff.
- The pupils have an excellent knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, selecting healthy options from the school lunches and attending the wide range of activity clubs. This has been recognised through the award of the Healthy Schools Status.
- The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children settle extremely well into both Reception classes and they enjoy school.
- Care, guidance and support are extremely strong, so pupils behave superbly well and are sensible and enthusiastic learners. The learning mentors provide excellent support for pupils who need additional help. Parents and carers commented that

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'Children receive excellent pastoral care and we also feel extremely well supported by the school.'

- The pupils enjoy school immensely and this is reflected in above average rates of attendance. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection because of the success of strategies introduced by the senior leaders.
- The pupils develop an extremely positive attitude to their learning because the curriculum meets the needs of all of them extremely well and they really enjoy their lessons.
- The headteacher and senior management team lead the school superbly well. One teacher commented, 'The school has never been as focused or successful as it is now with a thirst for greater improvement still. The head is firm but kind, he takes time to talk to parents.'
- Excellent links with the local community and external agencies contribute very effectively to the provision.
- Links with parents and carers have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now outstanding. The weekly newsletter is valued by parents and carers.

The success of the school is due to the headteacher, governing body and senior management team providing extremely clear educational direction that is ensuring excellent outcomes. Equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination are pursued determinedly. There is also a continual drive for improvement. The very effective systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school are playing their part in sustaining standards over time. The school's excellent organisation, strong, shared vision, and superb way issues in the last report were tackled underpin its outstanding capacity to continue moving forward.

There are two main areas for improvement.

- Although teaching and learning are consistently good or better, the teachers sometimes miss opportunities to challenge pupils in their written feedback and comments when marking work.
- Although provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, there are occasional missed opportunities for adults to provide additional challenge for more-able children in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. ♦

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more-able children in the Reception classes are fully challenged in all areas of their learning in indoor and outdoor learning activities.
- Ensure that all the teachers improve the quality of their marking by providing clear, concise written feedback that will challenge and guide all pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The pupils enjoy learning immensely because lessons are very well planned and excellent relationships contribute to an exciting climate for learning. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, there was a buzz of enthusiasm as the pupils used partner feedback to improve

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their writing about Malorie Blackman and consolidate their knowledge of writing biographies and autobiographies. The lesson supported Black History Month extremely well and gave all pupils superb opportunities to reflect on aspects of social history. All Year 1 pupils made very good progress learning about senses in science because the lesson was active and challenging. All groups of pupils made good progress because the teacher encouraged them to use initially simple but effective steps to gain knowledge, confidence and competence.

Achievement is at least good for all groups of pupils including those who speak English as an additional language because effective strategies and support are in place. Pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities do well because of extremely effective support. The school's tracking data and the inspection evidence indicate that all pupils are on course to reach or exceed their challenging targets. Work seen in lessons and many pupils' books was above average in mathematics, English and science, reflecting consistency over time. The pupils take pride in their work and this is reflected in good standards of presentation. ♦ Examination of pupils' work confirms that literacy, information and communication technology and mathematical skills are contributing well to their future economic well-being.

The pupils are extremely well behaved, polite to visitors and cooperate well with each other. They are enthusiastic learners who have a sensible attitude to their work. ♦ The pupils work extremely well with others in small and larger groups. They know that their suggestions and ideas will be valued. The school council decided through a democratic process what pupils wanted and agreed designs.

The pupils are very proud of the colourful and beautifully decorated toilets that they helped design and select colours. These had previously been identified as needing improvement by the pupils. The pupils have an excellent awareness of other cultures, ethnicities and religions. They learn to make a very positive contribution to their school, local and global communities, raising money for local and international charities, acting as Playground Buddies and being involved in many community projects, such as the Under One Sky community carnival. They contribute also to the community Eid celebrations. The pupils talked sensitively about world issues, such as the floods in Pakistan, protecting the environment by not allowing too many trees to be destroyed, human greed in the world and the futility of war.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Extremely strong relationships and excellent attitudes and behaviour contribute to a positive climate for learning. The large majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good and some were outstanding. The teachers use assessment information well to plan work that matches the needs of all groups within the class effectively. More-able pupils and different groups of pupils are challenged well in the vast majority of lessons. The teachers use questions effectively to check the pupils' knowledge and understanding and the pupils enjoy well-planned opportunities to discuss their ideas with others during 'talking partner' sessions. Outstanding use of different teaching methods helped Year 6 pupils to plan their own group contribution to an assembly. The pupils suggested creative ideas confidently and enthusiastically, such as performing a Haka dance and sharing drama sketches, to show learning about the Second World War and life cycles in science. Maturely, the pupils allocated roles and planned the content of their contribution. The teachers give good oral feedback to the pupils on how to improve their work, but quality marking that clearly challenges the pupils to improve is not always consistent. Pupils with additional needs are supported extremely well by learning support staff and teaching assistants.

The curriculum is extremely well planned and matched to the needs of all groups of pupils. The very strong personal and social education programme assists pupils' outstanding personal development. Specialist teaching in art, design technology and music enhances

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the provision. The quality of written work produced during Black History Month was very good. Enrichment is extremely good and the wide range of visits, residential activities, clubs and activities are popular and well attended. Extra-curricular mathematics lessons were a result of the school making a major contribution to a series of mathematics programmes for Tamil TV.

The extremely caring ethos results in very happy pupils who thoroughly enjoy school life. The pupils' needs are central to the work of the school and all the adults help children and parents and carers effectively to get the best from learning. Support for pupils who need additional help is extremely well planned. The school works very well with external support agencies to support all pupils. Excellent support is given to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Superb support from learning mentors ensures that the pupils develop confidence and make significant steps in their learning. Parents and carers commented on the excellent pastoral care and active support they receive and the exceptional help given that has helped them cope with difficult circumstances. Extremely good relationships with needy pupils and their families ensure that these pupils make good progress. The pupils are taught in ability groups and more-able pupils receive targeted support, enabling more pupils to reach higher levels in English and mathematics.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's and senior leadership's superb leadership and skilful management have permeated the school resulting in very high staff morale and increased staff stability in recent years. The leaders communicate ambition extremely effectively and they have a very thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The middle managers reflect the senior management's excellent drive and ambition; they talk enthusiastically about their own research within the school and are always striving to be even better. The leadership and management of teaching are excellent and have ensured that all teaching is at least good. The senior management is dedicated to making sure the pupils achieve well and that the staff bring high-quality skills to their work. The weekly monitoring of pupils' progress and 'drop ins' throughout the school are excellent and highlight any areas of weakness, leading to improvement such as that seen recently in writing and mathematics. The headteacher and the senior management team lead the school with competence and compassion, valuing the work of others and encouraging them to take responsibility.

The governing body supports the staff extremely well in work to improve the school and challenges the school effectively to ensure that school improvement initiatives are

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successful. The governing body monitors and evaluates the work of the school very efficiently. Appropriate developmental areas to improve the effectiveness of the school further are identified clearly in the school improvement plan and the governing body pays close attention to them.

The cultural diversity of the school is highly valued and celebrated and, consequently, the pupils develop an excellent understanding of both the school and local community. The school has led the way in the provision of halal and non-halal meat offered at lunchtime. There are very good links with schools in Sri Lanka, Ghana, Kenya and Australia. Links at a national level and the monitoring of the outcomes of national initiatives are less well developed.

The school promotes equalities expertly, as is reflected in the profile of high achievement across different groups. All safeguarding procedures and checks on adults are robust and, where applicable, fully meet statutory requirements. ♦ Excellent partnership links with the local schools, local community and various support agencies contribute to the school's excellent provision. The school deploys its resources extremely well, particularly to improve provision for pupils who need extra support and intervention.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception classes with the skills and knowledge levels below those expected for their age. They make good progress and, consequently, their attainment is broadly average by the time they join Year 1. Progress is outstanding in their personal, social and emotional development. The staff provide interesting activities and the children have good opportunities to learn through activities led by adults and those they choose for themselves. ♦♦

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The teaching is good overall but, occasionally, the adults miss opportunities to challenge groups of children and extend their learning in the indoor and outdoor situations. Excellent links with parents and carers and well-planned induction arrangements contribute successfully to the children's enjoyment of school. The children enjoyed learning about fruit and vegetables and there were good opportunities for them to observe and explore different fruit, such as a kiwi. In cutting open the fruit, one child showed sheer delight when she saw all the seeds inside. The children enjoyed observing the different fruit using magnifying glasses. Occasionally, however, tasks are not always challenging enough for more-able children in the indoor and outdoors activities. ♦ The children learn to play sensibly with each other in the role-play areas. A small group organised themselves well, selecting and buying fruit and vegetables from the class shop. The school is continuing to improve the outdoor provision. There are good systems for tracking children's progress and the provision is well led and managed.

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

There was an average response for a school of this size. Most parents and carers say that their children enjoy attending school and that they make good progress. ♦ Parents and carers regard the school as caring and supportive. They identify a number of strengths in the school including the activities, the relationship with staff and pupils' enjoyment. The majority of the few parental/carers criticisms were offered constructively, such as more information on pupils' progress, help to support pupils' learning and more immediate response to parents' suggestions. These were discussed with the headteacher. The inspectors found evidence to support the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marlborough 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	55	34	40	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	49	33	39	6	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	42	37	44	8	10	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	35	41	4	7	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	37	44	35	42	7	8	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	45	30	36	8	10	4	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	39	45	54	5	6	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)	29	35	34	40	1	1	8	10
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	30	41	49	9	11	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	32	43	51	5	6	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	33	29	46	8	10	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	37	44	35	42	7	8	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	51	28	33	12	14	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marlborough Primary School, Harrow ♦ HA1 1UJ

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember how extremely polite and considerate you all were and how beautifully you all behaved. We enjoyed seeing so much of your work displayed beautifully around the school. You and your parents and carers told us that Marlborough is an excellent school and we agree. These are the things we found that your school does well:

- You get off to a good start in the Reception classes and make good progress through the rest of the school. You reach above-average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 because the teaching is consistently good.
- Your teachers work hard and this helps you to do well in your learning.
- You all enjoy learning immensely and your attendance is good and continues to improve.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are extremely sensible and know how to keep safe.
- You benefit from many fun activities, clubs, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares for you extremely well and teaches you a lot about how to be healthy and to care for others.
- Your school council is well organised and is working very well with your teachers to make sure that your school continues to improve. Your toilets are attractively decorated.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and governors lead the school extremely well and all the staff work effectively together as a team to make sure that Marlborough is a safe, secure and fun place to learn.

There are two things we have identified for staff and governors to improve:

- Ensure children in the Reception classes who find the activities easy are given more challenging work.
- Ensure your teachers always challenge you to do even better when marking your books,.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future. You can all help by continuing to work really hard.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace Lead inspector (On behalf of the inspection team)

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