

Marcham Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123155
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380609
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2012
Lead inspector	John Horwood

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Leese
Headteacher	Viv Hutchinson
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 October 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Horwood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector used a number of strategies to observe learning. These included lesson observations ranging from 10 to 45 minutes. A total of three hours 40 minutes was spent observing teaching which included visiting seven lessons taught by six teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Informal discussions also took place with parents, carers and pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings, the school's information on pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work. The responses to questionnaires from 95 parents and carers, 10 staff and 68 pupils were examined and analysed.

Information about the school

Marcham Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The number of pupils in each year group fluctuates and not all year groups are taught in single-age group classes. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than that found nationally and a below average proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than that found nationally. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are lower than the national figures, as is the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs.

The school has achieved Activemark and been awarded Oxfordshire Accreditation for Primary Languages Bronze. It does not meet the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. A privately managed pre-school which operates within the school was inspected and reported on separately.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The pupils are helped to develop good social skills and this has led to good behaviour. Strengths within the school leadership, together with recently improved teaching, are evident with the attainment of the majority of pupils being high. Attendance is also high. The school is not yet good because achievement over recent years is satisfactory.
- Most pupils make at least the expected progress and an increasing number make good progress. Attainment of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs has been low, but earlier identification and effective support is resulting in improved progress and the gap between them and their peers is closing.
- Teaching is improving and much is now good. Teaching of linking letters and sounds (phonics) is good for the younger children. Although pupils say that teachers help them improve, they do not always know if they are doing as well as they should be and how to achieve this. Lessons involve a good pace of learning with challenging work but these aspects are not always maintained throughout the whole lesson.
- Behaviour has improved because the school has a clear, secure behaviour policy. Sanctions and rewards are well managed. Disruption to lessons is rare. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are taught how to keep safe and healthy. They have positive attitudes to learning and like coming to school.
- The headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision for improving the school. They monitor school performance and the quality of teaching regularly through pupils' progress meetings, lesson observations and assessment data. This is leading to more good teaching and improving progress. Not all staff are consistently involved in the management of, and taking responsibility for, pupils' progress.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently maintain a good pace of learning and challenge throughout lessons
 - ensuring pupils always know how to get to the next level in their learning and are helped to do this.
- Involve staff at all levels in tracking the progress of the pupils in their class to increase their accountability.
- Ensure that the improved progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is maintained by early identification and support.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Attainment on entry to Reception is below expected levels. The Early Years Foundation Stage teacher works closely with the pre-school provision to maximise continuity of provision. In Reception, children make good progress and attainment is broadly average when they move to Year 1, except in calculation and aspects of problem solving. Attainment levels and progress made are closely monitored and checked. Children are helped to learn by good teaching, especially of phonics, and a wide range of resources both indoors and outdoors. Children's emotional development is well supported by caring staff. The close working arrangements between the Reception and Year 1 staff prepare children very well for their move from Reception into Key Stage 1. A typical written comment from a parent or carer described the provision as very well organised and run, and providing a fantastic and nurturing start for the children.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Reading skills are currently broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6. Attainment in mathematics and English is similar. The attainment levels of pupils who are not disabled or do not have special educational needs are consistently high as a result of good progress. While most sizeable groups make similar progress, this has not been true for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Their attainment has been low because of slower progress. This significantly impact on the results in 2011 when these pupils represented almost half the class. This is not the situation now as pupils are identified early and good systems put in place to support them so they are now making good progress. Throughout the school, the progress seen in lessons is always at least satisfactory and usually good. This is confirmed by the work seen in books. Most parents and carers say their children are making good progress and developing good academic skills. This differs slightly from the inspector's view because progress

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is assessed over a longer period and for all pupils.

Pupils enjoy their learning, as was seen in a Reception phonics lesson where children all joined in the active session, which included physical actions and songs to support learning. In all lessons, pupils show good attitudes to learning and this was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson where pupils joined in purposeful discussion about comparisons between two stories. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, made exciting by practical use of weighing scales, pupils showed their ability to work well in small groups by recording their results both sensibly and enthusiastically. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with complex needs, were always fully integrated into activities and well supported by adults.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have good relationships with pupils. While the impact of teaching has been satisfactory over time, much of the teaching is now good with none inadequate. Teachers provide a range of activities which develop links between subjects to make learning meaningful. They generally use assessment data well to provide challenging work for all pupils but sometimes this is not consistent throughout the lesson. They involve pupils very well in the learning activities but do not always give them sufficient information about whether they are doing as well as they should be and what they need to do to reach the expected levels. Teaching assistants are well trained to support pupils' needs and provide good support, both in the classroom and during small group work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and make helpful comments.

The curriculum supports both academic and personal skills well. Teachers use themes to link subjects and provide activities which extend and develop pupils' basic skills. Teaching has a good impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through learning about values and beliefs as well as about different faiths and cultures. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have good opportunities to choose the activities to work on. Teachers are very good role models and have high expectations of pupils' academic and social development. Almost all pupils and most of their parents and carers who completed questionnaires say teaching is good. This differs from the inspector's view because the impact of teaching over a longer time is taken into account.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour seen during the inspection was good. Parents and carers, as well as pupils and staff, confirm that this is the normal situation in the school. The questionnaire responses about behaviour and bullying are very positive. This is also reflected by pupils saying they feel safe in school, a view shared by staff, parents and carers. A few parents and carers think that bullying is not always dealt with effectively, but pupils say there is hardly any now and that they can always talk to the headteacher 'as she really cares and will always listen'. Pupils are aware of the need for internet security and no incidents of cyber-bullying have been recorded. The

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school has effective procedures to prevent and deal with any incidents of bullying. Incidents of any type are very rare and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Although a few parents and carers were concerned about some disruption to lessons, evidence shows that this is extremely rare. The school is a very harmonious community with excellent relationships throughout. Inspection findings support the prevailing view that behaviour and safety are typically good. Attendance at school is high compared to other schools.

Leadership and management

There are good aspects within leadership and management, including effective leadership by the headteacher and support from the governing body. The impact of their actions is not fully reflected in pupils' achievement because, until recently, pupils with specific additional needs were not identified early enough. This meant that support strategies were put in place too late to ensure they made good progress, which in turn limited the school's performance in national tests. Leaders have, however, consolidated good behaviour while improving attendance from above average to high. They have also raised the attainment of most pupils who are not disabled or do not have special educational needs. These improvements, together with improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and the curriculum, which were identified in the last inspection, confirm that the school has a satisfactory and growing capacity for further improvement.

The governing body provides effective support and challenge to the school. Several members visit regularly and have a good understanding of the school and what needs to be done for it to improve further. They share the headteacher's clear and determined vision of improving academic standards while supporting pupils' personal development. The very good relationships throughout the school mean that every pupil is well known by adults. The achievement of groups of pupils is now monitored closely so that any differences are identified early and actions taken to address their needs. Consequently pupils now have equal opportunities to succeed. There is no evidence of discrimination of any kind and within class pupils are always very supportive and caring of those less fortunate than themselves. Members of the governing body and school leaders are all involved in monitoring the well-being of pupils and all safeguarding requirements are met.

The school leaders have supported teachers well in developing their skills through a programme of classroom observation and professional development, and this has motivated staff and generated a good team spirit. Although teaching over time is satisfactory, the improvements in teaching demanded by leaders have increased the proportion of good lessons. Nevertheless, there are still inconsistencies in the pace and challenge of learning in some lessons, and not all teachers are fully involved in tracking the progress of the pupils in their class.

The curriculum is broad and balanced with a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. All pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential visit, usually in Year 5 or Year 6. Through the partnerships with other schools, pupils have good

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opportunities to meet pupils from different backgrounds to their own and there are opportunities through the cluster to provide additional opportunities for those who have particular gifts or talents. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its strong links with the local community and through links to more distant communities.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



14 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Marcham Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Marcham OX13 6PY

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you and looking at the work you do. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

There are things I admired about your school and these are a few of them.

- You get on very well together and enjoy coming to school where you feel safe.
- You tell me that any type of bullying is very rare and dealt with quickly and well.
- Behaviour is normally good around the school.
- Your teachers make lessons enjoyable and help you to learn.
- School leaders are ensuring that the school improves.

For the school to become better, I have asked your headteacher to do the following things.

- Raise your achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently maintain a good pace of learning and challenge throughout your lessons
 - ensuring teachers always explain to you how to get to the next level in your learning, and help you get there.
- Involving all staff in taking responsibility for your progress
- Ensuring that the improved progress of those of you who are disabled or who have special educational needs is maintained by providing you with the extra support you may need.

All of you can help the school to move forward by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood
Lead inspector

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