



Marlbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 116684
LEA Herefordshire

Inspection number 274773
Inspection dates 6 – 7 June 2005
Reporting inspector Ray Jardine

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Green Croft
School category	Community		Redhill, Hereford
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		HR2 7NT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01432 266643
Number on roll	407	Fax number	01432 272179
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev. Peter Haddleton
Date of previous inspection	7 – 10 June 1999	Headteacher	Ms T A Kneale

Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 - 11	June 2005	274773

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Introduction

This inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection. It was undertaken with the support and co-operation of all staff and governors of Marlbrook Primary School.

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors and one child care inspector.

Description of the school

The school is bigger than other primary schools, with 407 pupils and includes a nursery. There are more boys than girls in the school. It is situated in the south of the city of Hereford in an area of relatively high social and economic disadvantage; over one third of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage; a small number are from a range of minority ethnic groups, none of whom are at an early stage of learning English. There are small numbers of travellers' children and looked-after children.

The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is quite high. A well above average proportion of pupils is on the register of special educational needs; 62 receive additional support from outside agencies and 10 of these have Statements of Special Educational Need. Their difficulties are mainly dyslexia and moderate learning. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in April 2004, the school has been working to expand its services to the community to become a 'full service' school. For example, it currently provides child care facilities and family learning and support services. The school's facilities are also used by the local community for clubs and activities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and this view is shared by both inspectors and the school. The school is improving rapidly under the leadership of the new headteacher. Although standards are considerably below average, pupils' overall achievement, taking account of their abilities, is satisfactory. It is better in mathematics and science than in English. The pupils in nursery and reception years and those with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because good provision is made for them. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in their personal development. They behave very well and feel happy and well-cared for as a result of the school's encouraging climate and good quality of care, guidance and support. Parents are pleased with the school's work.

Teaching quality is at least satisfactory and some of it is good or better, but assessment is not used consistently across the school. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced through many extra-curricular activities. Good use is made of the wider community to enrich pupils' experiences, and of outside organisations to enhance pupils' well-being and to raise their self-esteem. The headteacher's good leadership has given strong direction and united the staff and governors towards common goals. The school's management is satisfactory and is improving, especially the quality of its self-evaluation and improvement cycle. Childcare provision at Marlbrook Kids Club overall is satisfactory and there are some good features. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection, and the pace of this progress has improved in the last year. The school's capacity to improve further is good. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement, especially in English
- Ensure that the developing role of subject leaders and governors in the school's cycle of self-review becomes integral to its work
- Improve the use of assessment to guide the level of challenge in lessons to meet the needs of all pupils

Achievement and standards

Overall, standards are well below average. Pupils' progress is satisfactory when compared with other schools nationally. When pupils enter the school in the nursery, their standards are low, particularly in their speech, language and social skills. Many children make good progress during their time in the nursery and reception years, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Even so, standards by the end of Year 2 remain relatively low. Most pupils make satisfactory progress taking account of their capabilities, and by Year 6 their standards are better, although still well below the national average. When compared with other similar schools, standards are close to the average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are assessed and supported well and make good progress towards their targets. Achievement improved last year compared to previous years; for example, more pupils achieved standards above the expected levels in both Year 2 and in Year 6. Achievement is better in mathematics and science than in English. However, the school did not meet its targets in these subjects last year. In English, the lower achievement is mainly due to boys who do not achieve as well as girls. The school is well aware of this and has been taking a variety of steps to address it in the past year, but these have yet to show an impact on results in national tests.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

The school sees pupils' personal development as central to its work, and this aspect of pupils' achievement is a strength. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with particularly good practice in moral and social development. During their time in the nursery and reception classes, children make very good progress in this area of learning, and most reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This good progress lays the foundations for pupils' good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils grow in social confidence throughout their career at the school, and see the school as a safe community of which they are proud to be a part. The small amount of bullying is effectively dealt with. They show interest in their work, obviously enjoy school and are keen to take part in school activities. Their relationships with staff and each other are very good, and they support each other when in difficulties, through such initiatives as the buddy stop and peer mentor schemes. In this mainly white school, diversity is celebrated in displays and books, and pupils understand the need to challenge stereotyping and discrimination. They are encouraged to develop questioning attitudes, and learn to respect the opinions and beliefs of others. The school

council plays an active role in improving the school's facilities and its suggestions are valued and acted upon. Attendance is slightly below average, but is improving because of a range of effective actions being taken.

Every effort is made to promote healthier lifestyles among pupils, and the school's very good work in this area has recently been recognised in the award of "Healthy School" status. Pupils know about the importance of exercise and sensible eating, and even the youngest children know which are healthy foods. Through innovative projects like the "Sow and Grow" vegetable growing scheme, pupils are effectively encouraged to take responsibility, learn new skills and develop their self-esteem. In addition, this scheme helps them to have a commercial awareness through the plan to sell the produce to the school kitchen, as well as contributing to the school's policy of promoting healthy lifestyles.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently good, and is founded on high expectations and very good relationships.

Teaching quality has improved over the past year. Much improved arrangements for monitoring and development of teaching and learning, and some good new teaching appointments, have contributed to this improvement. Teachers' increasing expectations of what pupils can do is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievements. Grouping pupils by ability for literacy and numeracy lessons is also helping teachers to raise pupils' expectations in these subjects.

Support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties are good; teaching assistants are briefed well and play an effective part in contributing to these pupils' good progress. Whilst there is some good and outstanding teaching, it is uneven across the school. In some lessons, assessments are not being used consistently to ensure pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged, and this affects their overall achievement. Questioning is generally challenging and pupils are expected to justify their answers to the class. New vocabulary is also given due emphasis. Teachers' marking is regular, and in the best cases provides guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. However, it is not consistent in showing pupils how they can achieve their individual targets in writing. The use of targets with pupils needs extending to help them reflect on their progress.

Grade: 3**Curriculum and other activities**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There have been recent improvements to curriculum plans to ensure pupils build their knowledge and skills more systematically from year to year; the school's work to reduce and ultimately remove mixed age classes by September of this year is also contributing to this better progression. Resources are used well to provide pupils with stimulating first-hand experiences to aid their learning. The curriculum in the nursery and reception is good; it offers a broad range of stimulating activities for children, with good opportunities to choose for themselves as well as to take part in activities directed by adults. New interactive whiteboards in every class are used effectively to enliven and illustrate discussions, but information and communication technology is not used enough to help raise standards. The school's recent acquisition of new computer resources to address this weakness is beginning to have an impact. Initiatives to improve boys' attitudes to reading through guided reading and the introduction of more non-fiction books are also showing signs of success.

The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of clubs, visits and visitors. The visit of ten foreign students was particularly effective in raising the pupils' awareness of different world cultures. Pupils' personal and social development is well planned and very effective in giving pupils a clear understanding of the importance of staying healthy and safe.

Grade: 3**Care, guidance and support**

Pupils' care, safety and welfare are central to the school's ethos and are well planned. There are robust procedures for child protection and dealing with accidents because training for staff is thorough and well focused. Pupils receive good guidance to support their personal development. The school's learning mentor is very effective in promoting positive attitudes to school amongst some disaffected pupils. Whilst pupils report there is some bullying, they also have strong confidence that the school does everything in its power to keep them safe and secure. Procedures for children entering the nursery are good; staff visit all the children at home before they start and there is a very good partnership with the nearby Early Years Centre. This good level of care continues throughout the school, where all staff know the children very well. A close partnership with parents is effectively encouraged.

The arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are a strength of the school; teachers and support staff work productively together to ensure these pupils have the best possible chance of succeeding, and the provision is managed well. The school works hard to involve the parents when their children's individual education plans are evaluated and new ones drawn up.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall; there are some good features and management in particular has improved this year. The relatively new headteacher provides good leadership that has united the staff in a common vision and purpose focused on appropriate school priorities. She enjoys the full confidence and support of staff, parents and governors. Teachers are enthusiastic and strongly committed to the school's improvement as a result of her good leadership.

The headteacher's view of the school's strengths and weaknesses is broadly accurate across its aspects. Since her appointment, much work is being done to improve the school's management and involvement of all staff in the school's development. Teaching is now closely monitored and teachers' targets for improvement are linked closely to school priorities. Staff and governors were centrally involved in devising the school's improvement plan, although parents were not so involved in influencing it. Improving systems for self-evaluation has been a particular focus.

The role of curriculum leaders in monitoring and reviewing their areas now features much more prominently within the school's cycle of self-review and is helping raise teaching quality. Staff work closely on key priorities and team work has been strengthened. However, many of these developments, as the school acknowledges, are recent; they are not yet integral and routine to its management cycle and the full impact on pupils' achievement is not yet evident. More also needs to be done to extend systems for tracking and analysing pupils' progress towards individual targets in key subjects to guide teaching and support.

Governors are influential in shaping the school's development and are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but they are not involved fully enough in monitoring progress in school priorities. The school has made some good appointments of new staff following a period of high staff turnover and instability that affected standards. The school's staffing is now stable.

There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion. The school makes good and imaginative use of many external agencies to support its work and to address barriers to learning amongst pupils, for example, in raising pupils' self-esteem and in planning for the needs of those with learning difficulties.

Grade: 3

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i>	School Overall
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	3
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	4
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	NA
Education for all learners aged 14-19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	NA

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Marlbrook Primary School
Green Croft, Redhill, Hereford. HR2 7NT

8 June 2005

Dear Pupils

You probably remember that we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed our time with you, and would like to thank you for all the help you gave us during the two days. We met many of you in lessons and talked with you in small groups, and what you said to the inspection team helped us come to judgments about the quality of education you are receiving. We were very impressed by how well you all behaved and how proud you are of your school.

We have written a full report about our visit, which has been sent to Ms Kneale. What we have set out below for you are some of our main conclusions about Marlbrook Primary School.

We were impressed with the following:

- your school gives you many opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge, both in the classroom and through clubs and visits
- your enthusiasm, hard work and good behaviour make the school a happy place in which to learn
- the teachers and other adults in the school look after you well, and encourage you to become mature and responsible
- the teaching you receive is helping you make sound progress in lessons
- you enjoy learning and take seriously the importance of having a healthy and safe lifestyle
- the headteacher and staff have very clear ideas about how the school can go on improving the education you receive.

We also found some areas which could be even better:

- many of you need to practise every day your skills in reading, writing and spelling
- The teachers need to set you challenging targets so that you improve your standards in all subjects
- the marking of your work needs to give more help with how you can improve your achievements.

With our good wishes for your future at Marlbrook.

Ray Jardine
Lead Inspector



Marlbrook Kids Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260333
Inspection date	06/06/2005
Inspector	Valerie Thomas
Setting address	Marlbrook Community Primary School, Green Croft, Redhill, Hereford, HR2
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Marlbrook Kids Club
Type of inspection	Care
Type of care	Out of School care

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ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marlbrook Kids Club opened in 2001. It operates from Marlbrook Community Primary School, which is situated south of Hereford. The club has access to several rooms within the school and there are outside play areas available. The club serves children who attend the school and the local community. A maximum of 30 children may attend the club at any one time. The club is open Monday to Thursday each week from 15.15 to 18.00 and from 15.15 to 17.00 on Fridays during term times and from 08.30 to 16.30 during school holidays.

There are currently 53 children from 3 to 11 years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

There are 10 staff who work with the children and of these, 8 staff have appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health within the setting is supported well by staff who follow effective health and hygiene procedures. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines and are independent in their self-care skills. They know, for example that 'the germs will get into the food and give you an illness' if you don't wash your hands before eating.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They are regularly encouraged to drink water and are able to help themselves at any time. Children are given choices for their snacks and enjoy eating fruit and making faces for their crackers with the salad. Healthy eating is also encouraged in partnership with parents during school holidays when they are asked to provide a healthy and well-balanced packed lunch.

Children enjoy good opportunities for physical exercise and learn about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle as they join in free-play and organised activities both indoors and out. Children like to play football and skip and sessions are provided for music and dance

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-organised environment, where most risks to children are limited through appropriate safety and security precautions. Staff monitor access to the group at all times and the outdoor areas are fully secure. Children know the boundaries in the outdoor areas set by staff where they can play safely and be seen by adults at all times. The clear procedures for outings are fully understood by staff and they talk to the children to help them understand about keeping safe. Although most children who attend the club experience fire drills as part of the school, they have not been involved in a fire evacuation procedure specifically for the club and there is no written procedure available. This compromises children's safety.

Children use a sufficient range of safe, good quality resources. The resources are appropriately organised to allow children to independently access them. Procedures implemented by staff, help ensure they remain safe for children to play with.

All areas used by the children are well-maintained and offer a stimulating environment for children.

Children are well-protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection issues and understand the correct procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and secure in the club's welcoming environment. They enjoy their time where they can relax or be active in accordance with their needs and interests and know the routines well. They concentrate and show good interest with the varied range of resources available. Planning of activities provides children with good opportunities to extend their experiences and maintain their interest, for example, baking, face painting and visits from the 'animal man' and a magician. They take an active part in making their own masks and enjoy playing imaginatively together with the dinosaurs. Children make their own decisions about their play and can readily access all equipment.

Children are well-supported by the staff who are skilled at encouraging independence and at listening and talking to them. They gain good levels of self-esteem and confidence as they develop positive relationships with adults and their peers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. They are valued and respected as individuals and their self-esteem and confidence is developed well by staff with use of praise and encouragement during their play and children with special needs are well-supported by staff. Children are well behaved. They know what is expected of them because of clear boundaries and explanations given by staff on what is right and wrong. Children help each other to achieve tasks such as making masks and reading the books.

Children have good opportunities to learn about others and the world around them through varied resources displaying positive images of different cultures and disability, planned activities and outings to places of interest such as a farm and the fire station. This helps children to gain a positive awareness of diversity and the needs of others.

Relationships with parents are positive and friendly. They are made aware of how the setting operates through the prospectus with most of the relevant policies included. Children's individual needs are discussed and recorded with parents and a daily exchange of information keeps parents informed on their child's well-being. This enables staff and parents to work together to meet the needs of the child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are effective recruitment procedures which ensures staff are appropriately vetted and there is a good level of qualified staff who work with the children. They attend additional training to extend their knowledge and this is used to broaden the experiences of children and contributes to the quality of care provided. However, due to recent changes in the management of the setting, there are several Children Act Regulations that have not been met, for example, notification to Ofsted of significant changes and written procedures for lost and uncollected children.

Most policies and procedures are in place, although some relate to previous management and the complaints procedure lacks the regulator's contact details. Therefore they do not give clear guidance to staff and parents for the correct procedures to follow. There are clear systems in place for recording accidents and medication, although these are not always shared with parents. Written consent to seek emergency medical advice is in place for most children, however, it is not in place for children who attend from the local community. This may compromise children's safety in the event of a medical emergency. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection's recommendations related to documentation for accidents, child protection and the statement for lost and uncollected children.

The child protection policy now includes a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Staff fully understand the procedure, which ensures children are well-protected. Some of the accident records are now signed by the parents to acknowledge the entry, although there is still a few that have not been shared with parents. This means that they may not be fully informed and unaware of their child's needs. Staff fully understand the procedures to follow in the event of a child being lost or not collected, however, due to a change in management, a written statement for the procedures is not available.

Complaints about the childcare provision

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure Ofsted is notified of all changes in staffing and changes in any of the rooms used for caring for children
- ensure policies reflect current practices, including all relevant details and provide a statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost or if a parent fails to collect a child
- ensure records for accidents and medication always include parental signatures to acknowledge the entries and obtain written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- devise a written procedure for fire evacuation and develop children's understanding of the procedure.

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