



# Much Marcle CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116904  
**LEA** Herefordshire  
**Inspection number** 279940  
**Inspection dates** 16 May 2006 to 16 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Cole AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Much Marcle
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Ledbury
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Herefordshire HR8 2LY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01531 660607
<b>Number on roll</b>	100	<b>Fax number</b>	01531 660607
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Hughes

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 16 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279940
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This small village school serves a rural area of generally above-average social and economic circumstances. Pupils, almost all of whom are White British, start at the school with above-average attainment. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below average. Most of the teaching staff, including the headteacher and deputy, are new to the school in the last two years.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The overall effectiveness of the school is good and the school provides good value for money. This is also the school's view. All main areas of the school's work, including Reception, are good. Standards are high and pupils achieve well, both academically and personally. Good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills are matched by pupils' increased confidence and independence. Pupils' outstandingly sensible, responsible behaviour reflects excellent self-discipline. This results from especially good moral and social development. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but they receive too little help to understand and value the cultural diversity of the wider society. The teaching and curriculum are good and they make education a lively, interesting and enjoyable experience for pupils. The school is rightly planning to improve the curriculum further by creating more links between subjects and extend opportunities for them to apply what they have previously learnt. The school is led and managed well. The headteacher's determined and clear-sighted leadership has established a strong new team of staff who have worked hard together to bring about good improvement in the school. Many aspects of the school's work are better than at the previous inspection. Improvements achieved and those planned have been based on the school's good understanding of its performance, which is achieved through careful checks. The school is very well placed to bring about further improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Give pupils more opportunities to apply the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in one subject to their learning in others.
- Extend provision for pupils' cultural development, particularly to help them understand and value the cultural diversity of society.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are achieving well. They start at the school with attainment that is above average and good progress throughout their time at the school means they leave in Year 6 with overall attainment which is well above average and, in some key areas, exceptionally high. Pupils reach the challenging targets the school sets for them. Year 6 pupils' national test results have been above average in most recent years and there are some signs of an improving trend over the last two years. Results in 2005 were exceptionally high in English and mathematics, and above average in science. The work of present Year 6 pupils points to a similar picture of high standards. This is consistent with the good progress pupils are seen to make in lessons, where they respond to challenging teaching with a determination to succeed. In English, pupils' speaking and listening skills are especially good. Pupils of all abilities and those with learning difficulties or disabilities make equally good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school has a sure sense of the values it wishes pupils to adopt and these are enshrined throughout the life of the school. Good progress in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is reflected in excellent behaviour, respectful and cooperative relationships and very responsible attitudes. Pupils do the sensible thing with little need for direction by adults. Pupils refute indignantly the idea that there could be bullying in their school and incidents are rare. This is a very calm, friendly and happy school where pupils grow significantly in selfconfidence and independence and greatly enjoy their education. Attendance is above average. Provision in art and music, links with the church and a new partnership with a French school support pupils' satisfactory cultural development but the school acknowledges that it needs to do more to help pupils appreciate the diversity of cultures in society. Pupils react keenly to challenge, work together very co-operatively and respond well to opportunities to contribute positively to the community. These valuable personal qualities combine with pupils' very good literacy and numeracy skills to prepare them very well for adult and working life. The school gives pupils good guidance on how to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle. Recent improvements in lunch arrangements, and surveys of pupils' choices, have helped pupils put healthy eating ideas into practice. Pupils take full advantage of the good opportunities provided for them to take exercise.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is lively, challenging and stimulating. Well-planned lessons focus firmly on the specific learning intended and are also made fun. Good use is sometimes made of modern technology to provide visually striking displays and demonstrations for pupils. Pupils respond with much interest and enthusiasm. Most are quick to offer answers to teachers' questions, showing confidence and a willingness to think for themselves. Behaviour in lessons is excellent. The pace of most lessons is good, reflecting teachers' high expectations of what pupils can learn and pupils' willingness to succeed. Occasionally the pace of learning slows in lessons for the youngest pupils when they are asked to concentrate on a task for longer than can be expected at their age. Improved assessments of pupils' progress are soundly used to plan the teaching. Lessons are tailored well to pupils' capabilities and pupils understand what is expected of them. Each term they are set personal targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy which most of them remember and understand. Marking of pupils' work is sound, with some good examples of guidance to pupils on how to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The range of subjects meets national requirements and the teaching of French is a valuable additional element. Programmes of work are well planned to suit the range of pupils' capabilities, needs and interests. In English and mathematics, they are especially successful in promoting much interest and good progress. The school has rightly set itself the target of extending pupils' opportunities to apply the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in one subject to their learning in others. Good provision is made to help pupils develop personal and social skills and know how to be safe and healthy. The curriculum is much enriched by a good range of educational visits, visitors and special events such as participation in poetry writing and reading competitions. There is also a good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, including several for sport. Boys and girls alike take keen advantage of the expert coaching in cricket and rugby provided.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Good care, guidance and support are provided. Pupils benefit from the school's strong ethos of close and caring relationships and its strong partnership with parents. Pupils are well understood and provided for as individuals and a good check is kept on each one's progress and welfare. They receive clear guidance on how to prosper in both their academic and their personal development. Formal procedures for safeguarding pupils are generally good. Pupils say they feel safe at school and their confidence and happiness is plain for all to see.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The clear vision and determined leadership of the headteacher have led to the development of a strong staff team committed to school improvement. Together they have achieved many good improvements across the work of the school and show a very good capacity to bring about further improvement. The teaching, the curriculum, pupils' behaviour, the care provided and the quality of leadership and management are all better than when the school was inspected previously. Other promising developments are under way or planned. These take account of parents' and pupils' views, show ambition and are based on a good understanding of the school's strengths and of how it can be made still better. The school keeps a good check on its own performance. Much enterprise has been shown in making links with other schools, community and church bodies, a local business and the European 'Comenius' organisation. These significantly increase the resources available to the school and enrich the quality of education. Like school staff, many governors are new to their role. They are becoming increasingly effective and they make a satisfactory contribution to leadership and management. Their commitment to their role and to children's needs has been evident in their enterprise

in establishing and taking management responsibility for the neighbouring nursery school.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils, The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to say a big 'thank you' to you all. We really enjoyed meeting you. You were very friendly and interesting to talk to. We were pleased to see how well you get on with your school work. You concentrate well and try hard and we think you are making good progress. We also noticed how well you behave. We have told your parents that your behaviour is excellent! You all get on well with each other and make it a very happy school. We also saw how much you enjoy school. Your teachers provide good lessons which are interesting and enjoyable and all the grown-ups look after you really well. We have said that we think Much Marcle is a good school. The adults in charge of the school are doing a good job. However, we have suggested two ways they could help you learn even more. We think you should be taught more about the wide variety of people who belong to our society, including their traditions and beliefs. This will help you later in life when you may live or work alongside people from different backgrounds from yourselves. We have also asked the teachers to make more connections between the subjects you study. This will help you to understand the reasons why you are asked to do certain tasks. It will also give you more practice in using your skills in literacy, numeracy and with computers. Thank you again for making our visit so enjoyable. We wish you the very best for the future. Yours sincerely, M H Cole Lead Inspector