

# Marshfields School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110943
<b>Local Authority</b>	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310463
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Karin Heap

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	156
6th form	22
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet James
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2005
<b>School address</b>	Eastern Close Dogsthorpe Peterborough PE1 4PP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 568058
<b>Fax number</b>	01733 553855

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

All pupils have a statement of special educational need for moderate learning difficulties. Two thirds are boys and over half have additional needs, including severe learning difficulties, social and/or emotional difficulties and/or communication difficulties. A small proportion of learners come from minority ethnic groups and a quarter of pupils are from areas with high levels of disadvantage. A high proportion of students are entitled to free school meals and in the sixth form, over two thirds qualify for the education maintenance allowance. Marshfields attained technology college status in 2002.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Marshfields is a good school where everyone is very committed and takes pride in their work. Parents are very complimentary about the school. One parent said, 'Marshfields has changed my son's life and our lives as a family, it is a fantastic school'.

The school has many outstanding features. Its very positive ethos is the foundation for students' exemplary behaviour and outstanding achievements in their personal development. The close team of well-established and experienced staff provide an exceptional quality of care and support so that students develop very good relationships and their preparation for life and transition to adulthood are exemplary. The school ensures that students' personal development is of a very high quality, and they have access to a rich environment that reflects other cultures. The active school council has a positive impact on the life of the school, for example in the promotion of more healthy food at lunchtime.

The school's new and innovative use of the 'bungalow' develops life skills well for students in Year 11. This is already being further developed to support other learners and outside groups, which shows the strong commitment of the school to serve its students and the community. The school offers an exceptional range of enrichment activities. It has achieved national recognition for the quality of its technology provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Standards attained by students are well below the national average, but given their particular and specific needs they achieve well. Students make good progress because they are taught well and in the best lessons they are fully involved and in control of their learning. Academic guidance is well developed in some subjects, for example food technology, but this is not yet embedded and consistent throughout the school.

The school provides a good curriculum which matches the needs of learners. The school's technology status has had a very positive impact on the education students receive. Since the last inspection, students have been given access to an even greater range of vocational courses which match their needs very well. The school offers an exciting and extensive range of additional activities which involves the local community. These are available, for example, to the 'physically handicapped and able bodied' group and support is given to local primary schools to take part in the Peterborough Oscars scheme for aspiring film makers. All of the school's work is underpinned by outstanding partnerships with other providers such as the family partnership worker. There are elements of good practice in the delivery of key skills; however, the development of literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) is not clearly structured so that pupils systematically improve their abilities throughout all subjects.

The school is led well; the headteacher and her leadership team have a firm commitment to raising standards through effective self-evaluation. The school is aware that self-evaluation now needs to become established practice to which all subject leaders should contribute. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to support the education of the students, for example they lead on enrichment activities on the Wednesday afternoon half term clubs. The school has rightly identified the need to further develop its assessment procedures so that the Marshfields assessment strategy becomes a more effective tool to inform teaching. Governors make a good contribution to support and challenge the school. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The sixth form has expanded its provision of foundation and intermediate courses. As a key provider in Peterborough for students with moderate learning difficulties, the sixth form admits students from mainstream and other special schools. The school also has a long established partnership with a college to provide courses for students whose attainment has been particularly low in the past. Standards in the sixth form are well below national averages; however, students make at least good progress because the range of courses meets their needs well. The school recognises, rightly, that its procedures to monitor the stages of their progress during the courses needs to be more refined. All students attain qualifications in appropriately challenging courses; those who left school in 2007 went on to further education, training or employment. Students make a very good contribution to college life. They receive good teaching through individualised learning programmes with outstanding guidance to help them make effective choices as to their next career or educational steps. Extensive work experience programmes prepare students for the world of work; these transition programmes are exemplary. The sixth form is well led. This is demonstrated in the perceptive forward planning which has enabled the expansion and the highly efficient way in which the sixth form works with other colleges to create a vibrant mix of educational experience.

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

- Formalise monitoring and evaluation systems to better inform teaching.
- Develop the role of curriculum managers to ensure key skills are monitored and consistently delivered across the curriculum.
- Develop a consistent approach to academic guidance so that all students can maximise their learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards on entry to Marshfields are well below the national average for students of similar ages. All students make at least good progress because they are well taught and have access to a vibrant, exciting and stimulating range of activities, which make learning fun. Standards in national curriculum tests and qualifications at the end of Year 11 are well below average. However, the school has high aspirations so that every student leaves with a qualification and all students at the end of Year 11 progress on to further education, training or employment. Those with additional needs are fully included because teachers have realistic expectations and take into account their individual needs. Students make particularly good progress in the subjects linked to technology status. The school has recognised that the monitoring and tracking systems of students' progress need to be further developed to better inform teaching and learning in order to raise their achievement.

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

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Students' personal development and well being are outstanding. Their behaviour and attitude to learning is exemplary and excellent relationships exist between everyone, which greatly enriches the learning environment. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding: they are reflective and know right from wrong. This contributes to the high quality of social harmony in the school. Students with additional learning difficulties and disabilities are well integrated with their peers, and students of all ages are involved in their own self-evaluation. They have great confidence because they are encouraged to take responsibility; for example, they are involved in a diverse range of community support activities and also act as mentors for mainstream students attending ICT workshops in the school. Attendance is outstanding; a high proportion of students attend regularly and the school provides effective support which enables those with illnesses to enjoy a full education. Students have a wide variety of excellent communal and charitable experiences, all of which contribute to preparing them to become mature and responsible young citizens of tomorrow.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching is good and inspectors observed some outstanding lessons. In the best lessons, teachers use an exciting range of resources and the different needs of individual students are well catered for so that they were enthusiastic and confident about their learning. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the learning in and outside the classroom and in some cases they make outstanding contributions, for example they use sign language to enable students with hearing impairments to play a full role in the lesson. The school has acknowledged that academic guidance and formal marking is yet to become consistent in order to establish consistently good and better teaching. The school is aware also that as the intake of students becomes more varied the planning for lessons needs to take greater account of the differing needs of individuals, as this is not always the case at present. Outstanding practice was seen for students with additional needs who have a 'passport' to clearly communicate their main learning needs to their teachers and the individual learning plans in Years 10 and 11 which help to plan and prepare students for work experience.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Curriculum provision is good and improving, with some outstanding features: especially its facilities, resources and highly skilled staff. The specialist status for technology makes a significant contribution to students' learning and has enhanced the curriculum provision. A strength is that the school's curriculum provides many practical situations which the students are likely to face in their adult life, for example, a child development course which includes experience with real babies. Learning opportunities are enhanced by outstanding links with

many local schools, enabling staff to share expertise and improve their practice and an excellent range of visits and visitors to support learning. The school is reviewing its Key Stage 3 curriculum to ensure it fully meets students' needs and it acknowledges the need for a greater emphasis on planned activities across subjects, especially for promoting literacy and ICT. Curricular management to achieve this goal is yet to be formalised. The school has continued to restrict the full delivery of the Key Stage 4 physical education curriculum. The curriculum provision for students with more complex needs is good and developing well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding because of totally committed staff who ensure that students learn in a safe and supportive environment. Outstanding pastoral support and high quality care are given to all students, including learners with additional needs. Students are very well supported through outstanding partnerships with therapists and health professionals. As a result, all students achieve well in relation to their personal targets. Individual education plans include clear, achievable targets and this information is regularly shared with parents and other partners. Views of parents are carefully considered and, as a result, they feel very well informed and are very supportive. The school has robust arrangements for safeguarding students and managing all areas of health and safety. Good practice for academic guidance was seen for example in food technology. Home-school books in Years 7 to 9 are used very effectively and the school is considering how it can extend this throughout all years. Systems for academic guidance still need to be formalised.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and her leadership team set clear direction and are focussed on improvement through effective self-evaluation. The good management of the technology status has had significant impact on the school and on the local and wider community. Leaders have correctly identified that self evaluation is an area which has yet to be fully embedded into all areas of school leadership, especially the work of subject leaders. Assessment of students' progress is currently under review and the school has, rightly, recognised that effective monitoring and evaluation of students' progress will inform teaching and future school development and training. The emerging Marshfield assessment and recording strategy is an example of developing good practice. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school; they make a good contribution in supporting the headteacher and are beginning to challenge the school constructively. The school is very effective in promoting inclusive practice providing access to a rich curriculum for everyone. The school is, rightly, highly regarded by the local authority and the local and wider community.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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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?	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
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?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

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

22 November 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Marshfields School, Peterborough, PE1 4PP

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed our time with you and talking to you about your work. It has been great to see how much you enjoy coming to school and to see how well you behave. You are all very friendly, cheerful and polite and helped us feel at home in your school. Thank you for sharing your work with us.

When we visited your lessons, we were impressed by all the good work that you are doing. We could see that you enjoy your learning and that you are keen to help each other. One example of this is the work you do in the bungalow and during the Wednesday afternoon courses. We were impressed with the many exciting activities adults were planning for you and the fun you have.

We are very pleased to tell you that you are lucky to go to such a good school. The headteacher, your teachers and all the other adults who work with you take great care of you and want you to do your best. You are doing very well to learn new things and to become well prepared for when you leave school. You are also doing very well in learning how to work together, helping each other and keeping safe. You are very good at using your student council to have a say in the running of the school.

I have asked Mrs James and the teachers to make sure that they know exactly how well you do in each subject so that they can help you to learn even better. I have also asked that teachers make sure they explain and show you what your learning targets are and to tell you what you need to learn next.

We will take away many good memories about your school. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Karin Heap

Lead inspector