

# Marsh Green Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106403
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	336667
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry McDermott

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Barbara Bourne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Duffy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Kitt Green Road Marsh Green Wigan WN5 0EF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's assessment system and information, internal and external monitoring records, the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, and 66 responses made by parents/carers to the Ofsted parents' questionnaire.

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

- how well all pupils throughout the school learn and make progress
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well the school meets the requirements and regulations for safeguarding pupils
- the capacity of the school's leaders and managers to secure sustained improvements over time.

## Information about the school

Marsh Green is smaller than average, with an Early Years Foundation Stage that includes provision for children of Nursery age. The refurbished Early Years Foundation Stage provision was opened in February 2009, under the leadership of a new coordinator. The school serves an area close to the centre of Wigan. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well above average. The very large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with a small proportion of pupils who do not speak English at home. The school hosts a breakfast club with places for 24 pupils. Among several other awards, the school holds the International Schools Award 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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Marsh Green is a good school with several outstanding features. Predominant among these are the excellent care, guidance and support which the skilled and dedicated adults in the school provide for the pupils in their care. This is the crucial element which underpins and sustains the extremely effective provision made by the school for: developing pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; ensuring that equality and diversity are celebrated, and all forms of discrimination are tackled rigorously; and promoting community cohesion. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the school and wider community.

Pupils make consistently good progress from the time they start in Nursery class to the time they leave Year 6 because teaching is good overall. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is average. The school provides a colourful and stimulating environment for learning which pupils say they like. This is reflected in their very good attitudes to learning in lessons. Sometimes, teachers give the same extended lesson introduction to pupils of all abilities. This inevitably slows the pace of learning for many in the class. The curriculum is good, though lack of a common planning format leads to some inconsistencies in the matching of work to pupils' learning needs. Pupils say they like the way the subjects are linked together, and they like to learn 'real stuff' on the visits they make to museums and other places.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. The school has maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection, and has moved forward significantly in most of the areas noted for improvement and in several other areas of its work because of the close attention paid to them by senior leaders over the intervening years. The school's assessment system tracks pupils' progress rigorously from year to year, and the school uses recognised national tests to check its own measures. Leaders are firmly focused on the need to raise attainment further. Subject leaders check regularly on the progress pupils are making, but do not yet monitor the quality of learning in lessons with sufficient rigour. School self-evaluation is accurate if a little modest. It is based firmly on the objective analysis and evaluation of facts and data.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and ensure learning is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that time at the start of each lesson is used more effectively to make all pupils clear about what they are going learn, and to get them rapidly engaged on learning tasks

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- ensuring that subject leaders check more closely that lesson plans match pupils' learning needs.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils learn well in most lessons because teachers set challenging tasks which demand that pupils think for themselves and because pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils know their immediate targets for learning in several subjects, and their longer-term targets in English, mathematics and science. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about how they assess each other's work. Their close involvement in evaluating their own learning makes a good contribution to their progress. When children join the Nursery, the very large majority have much lower skills in all areas of learning than are normally found in children of their age. By the time they leave the Reception class a small number are close to the age-related expectations. From Year 1 to Year 6, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. No group of pupils underachieves. Published national test results and inspection evidence confirm that attainment is broadly average with a trend of improvement.

Pupils achieve well both personally and academically. They are proud to wear their school uniforms, and to represent their school community. As members of a school holding the International Schools Award, older pupils speak knowledgeably about the experiences of other pupils of their age in the Czech Republic, in Turkey and in France. These links have a high profile in the school and inspire younger pupils to widen their horizons. Pupils say they like school, and enjoy lessons where, 'teachers make learning fun'. They report with complete assurance that they trust the adults in the school, and they know that someone will help them if needs arise. Pupils remark that among the aspects of the school they appreciate most are 'happy relationships' and the 'respect' for people, the environment and 'all other things'. Pupils are thoughtful, considerate, and tolerant of other pupils' ideas and views. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically, for example through the active school council, as lunchtime play leaders, or as friendship buddies and raise significant amounts for charity. Their behaviour is good, particularly in lessons, and this contributes strongly to the progress they make. Pupils' attendance is very close to the national average. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are well-rounded and sensible young people, satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Inspectors observed some lessons where pupils' learning was outstanding, many lessons where learning was good and some where learning was satisfactory. Common features of all lessons were the very good relationships between adults and pupils, pupils' consistently good behaviour, and the active involvement of well-trained learning support assistants. In the best lessons, pupils are expected to work independently and to think for themselves as they work through tasks well matched to their learning needs. When teaching is less effective, teachers give the same explanations to the whole class. Some of these are overlong. Higher attaining pupils have to wait for the explanation to stop before they can start work, and lower attaining pupils never get a clear picture of what they are supposed to do. Learning slows in consequence. An inconsistent approach to the planning of lessons contributes to this weakness. The marking of pupils' work is good, and gives clear indications of what pupils need to do to improve.

Recent changes to the curriculum have brought subjects together around 'themes', so that pupils can apply particular skills in a range of circumstances. A wide variety of visits, visitors, and direct links with schools in other countries support these themes and help bring learning to life. The full impact of these changes has yet to be seen on the standards pupils reach. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well, selectively, to support learning. The breakfast club helps pupils to get their day off to a healthy start.

Staff know pupils very well, and use this knowledge expertly to prepare short sharp interventions which help pupils to catch up when problems have occurred. When necessary, the school can access longer-term support through very effective

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partnerships with professional and other agencies. However, the school provides an absolute gem of its own by offering longer-term support for the most vulnerable pupils through its nurture group. This self-contained unit within the school allows these pupils to tap into experiences and learning not previously available, and helps them very successfully to build their self-confidence and self-esteem, and to become effective learners.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

All staff in the school are fully committed to giving pupils every opportunity to learn and develop well. Adults are enthusiastic, self-critical, and their morale is high. Under the low key, self-deprecating and very good leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, they have created a vibrant and welcoming learning environment which pupils like. The school is a happy, calm place which runs smoothly from day to day. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school provides for their children. Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly, and accurately link this to pupils overall achievement. Subject leaders are now beginning to undertake this activity. However, their monitoring is not sufficiently focused on pupils' learning, and this is holding the school back from driving standards up even more quickly. The school sets challenging targets, based firmly on validated records of pupils' previous knowledge and understanding, which it usually exceeds by a wide margin. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements well, and are given high priority. The governing body meets all of its statutory requirements, gives generous support and encouragement to the school, and is not afraid to challenge the school over the overall standards pupils reach. Provision for promoting community cohesion is excellent. It is founded on strong links within the local community, within the region through the local Education Business Partnership, and internationally through excellent direct links with schools in several other European countries. Through these international links, and through its own personal, social and health education programme, the school is extremely successful in ensuring that all forms of inequality are addressed and eradicated, and that diversity is recognised and celebrated. The school gives good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children often enter the Nursery class with skills much lower than those normally expected for their age. Because links with parents, teaching, the curriculum and resources are all good, children settle into the Nursery easily, and quickly learn how to play and work together. This provides the solid bedrock on which the school builds future learning. By the time children reach the end of the Reception class, some are close to reaching the early learning goals. This shows good progress. Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed coordinator has put into place good procedures which have brought assessment routines into line with the rest of the school, in order to sustain continuity and encourage progression. The experienced team of teachers and classroom support assistants form a close-knit group who interchange roles seamlessly. In sessions observed during the inspection, pupils engaged in both teacher-led and self-chosen activities, around, for example, leaves blown into the outdoor learning area. This provided rich learning opportunities for language development, for reading, for counting, for creative work and for writing in which the children engaged with great delight. Going outside in the light rain gave children the chance to practise dressing themselves in brightly coloured protective clothing. Teachers' expectation that children would complete this task largely unaided promoted their personal development very well and also brought immense satisfaction to many faces. Children behave well because they know clearly where limits are, and this improves their moral and social development rapidly. Children are safe, and welfare requirements are exceeded. Because the building housing the unit and the leadership are relatively new, the full impact of the whole provision on the rate at which children progress has yet to be seen.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Sixty six parents returned the Ofsted questionnaires. Almost all expressed complete confidence in the work of the school and these views are confirmed by the inspection. A very small number of parents raised questions about bullying. Inspectors looked at this, mainly through conversations with pupils though also through looking at the school's own records. The pupils did not express any undue concerns, and the school's records did not raise any alarm with inspectors. Though every incident of bullying is regrettable, the school does have very clear policies and actions in place to deal with bullying, and pupils were very clear that they knew what to do if it does occur.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Marsh Green 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 inspector received 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 215 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	61	42	38	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	52	54	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	38	68	61	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	50	54	49	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	47	58	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	40	62	56	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	39	66	59	2	2	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)	40	37	64	59	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	38	64	58	2	2	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	38	60	54	6	5	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	47	52	47	6	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	47	52	47	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	64	38	34	3	3	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



Inspection of Marsh Green Primary School, Wigan, WN5 0EF

Thank you very much for being so polite and helpful to us when we inspected your school recently. It was a pleasure for us to be with so many friendly and happy young people who are clearly so proud of their school.

We found that Marsh Green Primary is a good school, and that it has some really outstanding parts. The main strength of the school lies in the excellent care, guidance, and support, it gives to you. This is the foundation for everything the school does. It ensures that you are all safe and secure; it helps you to become very good citizens with clear sense of what is right and what is wrong; it gives you an excellent understanding of the world around you – both in Marsh Green and further afield.

I also found some things the school could do better, and which would help you to learn faster, and reach higher levels than you do now. So I want the school to do the following things:

- make sure that the start of lessons are much shorter than they are now, with teachers giving separate and brief instructions to different groups of you, and then getting you started quickly on your work
- make sure that those adults who are responsible for subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science, check that teachers are planning lessons starters which meet your particular needs more closely.

You can help the school to get even better by continuing to work as hard as you do now, by remaining the happy, sensible and very pleasant young people you already are. May I wish you all good luck for the future!

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