

The Marlborough Primary School

Tytherington Drive, Macclesfield, SK10 2HJ

Inspection dates 19 - 20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in each section of the school: in Early Years (Reception), and in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils' personal and social development is nurtured effectively and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The pupils enjoy school. They are happy here; they feel safe and behave well. The Marlborough is a vibrant school, where there is always lots going on to interest pupils.
- Teaching is good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Improvements in the teaching of English and mathematics have driven up standards and raised expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Leadership is strong at all levels, including governance. Much has been achieved by school leaders: a previous decline in outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 has been arrested, traditional strengths have been maintained, and the school is improving strongly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of teaching still requires improvement.
- Occasionally, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that are legacies of previous, less effective teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons. As the inspection took place early in the school year, pupils' work from the previous year was also scrutinised as well as their current work. A wide range of documentation was examined, including records of the pupils' progress in each class.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior staff, subject leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with a group of parents.
- Sixty seven on-line responses to Parent View were analysed during the inspection. The evidence from Parent View was supplemented by letters received from individual parents and from an analysis of the results of the school's own survey of parental opinion.

Inspection team

Brian Padgett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jeremy Barnes

Additional inspector

David Halford

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school educates pupils from many parts of Macclesfield. Most of the pupils are White British with around 10% of pupils from a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils believed to be eligible for free school meals, and therefore in receipt of the pupil premium, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportions of pupils with a disability or with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are also below average.
- Before- and after-school childcare is provided within the school grounds by the Kool out of School Club. There is also provision for pre-school children on site at the Greenhills Pre-School. Both are privately managed and are inspected separately by Ofsted. They were not part of this inspection.
- The school exceeds the floor targets for standards and progress in English and mathematics laid down by the government as a minimum requirement for primary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching further by eradicating those aspects of teaching that require improvement.
- Identify and close any remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding arising from the past.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Nearly all children entering Reception have pre-school experience. They settle into school extremely well. They consistently make very good progress from their different starting points, including a good start to early reading. Children regularly leave Reception exceeding the expected levels of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age.
- Pupils sustain good progress in Key Stage 1, making good gains in their numeracy and literacy skills and in their personal and social development. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and are improving, year-on-year.
- The decline in standards in Key Stage 2 in recent years has been arrested. The trend is now firmly upwards. Year 6 pupils achieved well in the 2012 national, end of Key Stage 2 tests, comfortably exceeding their challenging targets in English and mathematics. A small proportion of pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding from when the school was less effective. Teachers are identifying these gaps and remedying them.
- In all year groups, the school's records show pupils make at least the gains expected of them. The pupils' exercise books retained by the school from the previous school year show work of good quality. The inspection took place early in the new school year but pupils' exercise books already contained a considerable amount of work of good quality. In lessons, most pupils' learning was good because they were given work that matched their learning needs and often challenged their thinking. The vast majority of parents believe their children are doing well at the school.
- Pupils who fall behind with their work are identified quickly. The school provides a wide range of support programmes and interventions to enable them to catch up. Pupils identified with special educational needs also receive the support they need and make similarly good progress to other pupils. The school has had notable success in providing for pupils with disabilities.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The majority of teaching observed in lessons was good. In each key stage, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception), teaching of an outstanding quality was seen. The school's monitoring records and external assessments corroborate these findings. Classroom routines have been quickly established and teachers have made a purposeful start to the new school year. Pupils have made a good start to learning.
- There have been significant improvements to many aspects of teaching since the last inspection. Lesson planning, the accurate assessment of work by teachers to plan and set targets, the marking of work and the involvement of pupils in evaluating what they have learned and in understanding their next steps have all improved. Teaching in the core skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology is now very secure.
- A small proportion of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 requires improvement. The school's monitoring of teaching quality is rigorous so areas for further development are already identified. Programmes of mentoring and training opportunities have been successful in promoting improvement, suggesting the capacity for further improvement is good.
- Teaching assistants make a major, positive contribution to learning in all classes. They support groups of pupils within lessons, teach specific programmes (for example, in mathematics) outside of class, and help individual pupils with particular learning needs to access the full curriculum.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have good attitudes to work. They like their teachers and enjoy school. Relationships with all staff are good. The school has a warm and welcoming ethos especially valued by parents and carers.
- Older pupils look out for younger ones. For example, acting as a buddy for children in Reception is part of the duties of Year 6 pupils.¹
- Pupils feel safe. They have trust in the adults who care for them at school. This is because any incidents that arise are dealt with quickly. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and of e-safety in particular. Bullying of any form is not tolerated and pupils report with confidence 'there is no bullying here'.
- Attendance is above the average for primary schools.
- Although good, pupils' behaviour is not outstanding. There is occasional low-level disturbance in lessons. However, this closely mirrors the quality of the teaching. In outstanding lessons, behaviour is outstanding. Behaviour is less than good only in lessons that require improvement.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. She has successfully driven the improvements in teaching quality and outcomes for pupils while maintaining the traditional strengths of the school that parents have long valued. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and performance are extremely rigorous.
- A strong leadership team has been created. Leadership is well established at all levels; subject leadership, for example, is developing well. New teachers are supported well and there are many training opportunities for established staff to foster further improvement. There is, therefore, good capacity to sustain improvement.
- The school provides an exciting, broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils. It is rich in special events that interest and motivate pupils and there is an extensive programme of after-school clubs. There has been significant improvement in mathematics.
- Safeguarding and arrangements for child protection are robust and meet requirements.
- Equalities are promoted well. Pupils who may be vulnerable to underachievement are nurtured and monitored carefully. Leaders value diversity and encourage respect for others and the understanding of differences. As a consequence, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has developed many productive partnerships. Of particular note are the partnerships with parents, the community and that with the local secondary school. All are aimed at improving learning opportunities for pupils and for strengthening the school's position at the heart of the community. Parents commented in particular about the improving communications between home and school, soon to be enhanced by an improved school website.
- The local authority has provided good support. It has provided a valuable overview of provision and has brokered effective consultant support for the school.

The governance of the school:

- Governance is of good quality. The governing body is well organised and efficient. It is thoroughly involved in the strategic direction of the school.

¹ The Year 6 pupils were not present during the week of the inspection. They were on a residential course in North Wales.

- Individual governors bring valuable expertise to bear; for example, governors have a keen understanding of the school's performance through their understanding of data. The level of challenge to the school's leaders is high; for example, through the appointment and performance management of staff. School leaders welcome governors' involvement.
 - Governance continues to improve. For example, governors are becoming better informed about the use of the pupil premium funding.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	111027
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	401165

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Mierzejewski
Headteacher	Susan Pollard
Date of previous school inspection	October 2009
Telephone number	01625 383050
Fax number	01625 612918
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