



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Marlborough Primary School  
Blenheim Road  
Roath  
Cardiff  
CF23 5BU**

**Date of inspection: January 2013**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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## Context

Marlborough Primary School serves the areas of Penylan and Roath in Cardiff. The catchment area is predominantly affluent, but with pockets of social deprivation. The school was established in September 2011 following the amalgamation of Marlborough Infant School and Marlborough Junior School

There are currently 514 pupils on roll, including 62 part-time pupils in the nursery. The school has 16 classes and two specialist resource base classrooms for children with moderate to complex learning difficulties.

Currently, about a third of the pupils come from ethnic minority communities. About a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Among these pupils, there are 25 different home languages.

Approximately 12% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well below the local authority and national averages.

The school has identified 10% of pupils as having additional learning needs, including 5% who have a statement of special educational needs. Nearly all the statemented pupils are in the two special resource base classes, with only a very few in mainstream classes.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2011, when the school was established.

The individual school budget per pupil for Marlborough Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £3,470 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Cardiff is £12,307 and the minimum is £2,873. Marlborough Primary School is 55th out of the 99 primary schools in Cardiff in terms of its school budget per pupil.

## Summary

<b>The school's current performance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Good</b>

### Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils make good progress by the end of key stage 2;
- pupil performance is above average when compared with that of similar schools;
- older pupils' skills in literacy and thinking are well developed;
- most pupils' behaviour is very good;
- pupils develop good independent learning skills as they move through the school; and
- pupils with additional learning needs receive good support.

### Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- all stakeholders share the headteacher's clear vision for the school;
- many staff at all levels carry leadership roles and responsibilities and they discharge their responsibilities well and contribute effectively to school improvement;
- the governing body works strategically and is a good critical friend to the school;
- there are comprehensive systems to monitor and evaluate provision and to act purposefully on the findings; and
- the development plan has appropriate priorities that link well to the outcomes of self-evaluation.

## Recommendations

R1 Continue to improve pupils' standards in mathematical development and writing in the Foundation Phase

R2 Ensure that the needs of most able pupils are met

R3 Improve the quality of teaching in a minority of classes

R4 Develop more consistent methods for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning

### What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the school's progress.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

#### Standards: Good

Most pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good throughout the school. Pupils communicate clearly and confidently with each other and with adults. In the Foundation Phase, pupils are keen to discuss their work and offer explanations of the task that they undertake. Many older pupils in key stage 2 can argue persuasively with each other and discuss their work with maturity and well-developed vocabulary. Learners listen very attentively to adults and their peers and respond accurately to instructions and questions. Many pupils across the school enjoy discussion and can describe what they have achieved effectively.

Most pupils make very good progress with their reading skills. Many younger pupils have a good understanding of letters and sounds. Many pupils generally enjoy reading and have a good understanding of a variety of texts. Many older pupils understand how to gather information quickly and know about different authors that they enjoy reading.

The majority of pupils' writing skills develop appropriately in the Foundation Phase and by the end of key stage 2 most pupils write with confidence for a good range of purposes in English. Older pupils can write at length successfully in a few areas of the curriculum, for example in history and in science.

The majority of pupils' mathematical skills develop at an appropriate level in the Foundation Phase and many pupils make sound progress with their work in number. Most pupils in key stage 2 use number with confidence and can apply their skills well in other areas of the curriculum.

Many pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills develop well in relation to communication. Many pupils in the Foundation Phase use control equipment with confidence. Many older pupils can effectively use and apply their ICT skills across other subjects. Pupils' thinking skills are good by the end of key stage 2. Many pupils can explain their thinking clearly and use a good variety of methods to organise their thinking well.

Pupils make a good start in using Welsh in the Foundation Phase. Many pupils throughout the school show that they enjoy learning Welsh. Pupils respond well to the regular opportunities for speaking and writing in Welsh. Pupils' skills in reading Welsh are starting to develop. By the end of key stage 2, many pupils have a good range of vocabulary and can speak using set patterns for Welsh.

When comparing the results at seven years of age in the Foundation Phase with the family of similar schools, pupils' performance is above average. Teacher assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 place the school in the highest 25% of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Last year, pupils' performance in language, literacy and communication as well as mathematical development was above average for the family of similar schools and matched the average for the family of similar schools in personal and social development.

Pupils' performance at the expected level 4 at the end of key stage 2 for all core subjects combined places the school in the higher 50% of schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Pupils' performance in mathematics and science in 2012 places the school in the lower 50% of schools with a similar proportion pupils entitled to free school meals. Attainment is above average for similar schools and for all schools in Wales.

Nearly all pupils with additional learning needs achieve well against prior attainment and personal targets. They make good progress relative to their ability.

Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress within the school.

### **Wellbeing: Good**

Pupils are polite and respectful. Most pupils' behaviour is very good in class and in the playground. Throughout the school, many pupils, pupils approach tasks with enjoyment and concentrate well for sustained periods, demonstrating good levels of independent learning. They show care, compassion and concern for others.

Nearly all pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have positive attitudes to healthy living and eating. Pupils participate well in making decisions through the school council and eco committee. Through these groups, pupils bring about improvements, for example in devising anti-bullying cards and setting up a school council newsletter. Pupils resolve minor playground disputes themselves through their Playground Peacemakers.

Attendance shows an improving trend. It is currently around 95%, which places the school in the higher 50% when compared with similar schools. Motivational rewards encourage good attendance, and parents report that their children want to be at school. Most pupils are punctual and there have been very few exclusions. The school re-integrates excluded pupils well.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

The school has recently reorganised its curriculum to provide a good range of learning experiences that appeal to most pupils and meet the statutory requirements. The school ensures that there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their thinking skills and problem solving skills across many curriculum areas. Teachers plan securely to develop pupils' skills in communication, numeracy and ICT. Teachers' planning secures good progression in most pupils' development of their skills, but the level of challenge in the work planned for the most able pupils is inconsistent and not always appropriate. In a few instances in the Foundation Phase, learning experiences do not always fully engage all groups of pupils.

Pupils participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities, educational trips and visits that enrich and extend their learning.

Staff provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to hear and read Welsh across the school. There is a good range of Welsh vocabulary on display in corridors and classrooms. The school promotes and celebrates a sense of Welsh identity effectively through regular Welsh lessons, an eisteddfod, a visit to Llangrannog and study of Welsh celebrities, artists and historical figures.

The school acts sustainably in its daily routines. An enthusiastic eco committee ensures that environmental issues are firmly rooted in school life. The school's provision for global citizenship, for example through links with Zambia, is good and, as a result, pupils understand their responsibilities as members of a global society.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

In the majority of lessons, where teaching is good, there are high expectations of learners. In these classes, teachers plan engaging and purposeful lessons through relevant topic work. Teachers often display good subject knowledge and use this to ensure pupils make the right progress. Teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils to learn. In a few lessons, teachers ask probing questions to develop pupils' thinking skills very well. In the majority of lessons, teachers match tasks carefully to pupils' levels of ability, move the learning forward at an appropriate pace and motivate pupils well.

However, in a minority of lessons, the work does not challenge pupils enough, the pace of pupils' learning is too slow and pupils make limited progress. In these less effective lessons, there is too much direction from the teacher and pupils do not think enough for themselves.

In most classes, a suitable range of assessment for learning strategies is in place. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In the majority of pupils' books, the marking is positive, but it does not always help pupils to move their learning forward. The individual targets set for pupils are generally helping pupils to progress with their learning. Teachers record pupils' achievements carefully and take good account of assessments at the end of the year to plan future learning.

Annual reports to parents are informative and meet statutory requirements.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

The school has a highly supportive ethos where pupils generally make sound progress in their learning and receive good support for their wellbeing. The school has appropriate policies and effective arrangements to support pupils' health and wellbeing. Purposeful activities ensure the promotion of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

When pupils start school, there are good arrangements in place to identify their learning needs. Careful monitoring of pupils' wellbeing ensures that staff know when pupils require support. The school has very strong links with a range of local authority services outside agencies to support the needs of pupils, for example the additional needs advisory service, the speech and language service and the ethnic minority and traveller advisory service.

Clear policies, and assemblies that engage pupils' interest well, promote pupils' moral and spiritual development effectively. Pupils co-operate well with each and are encouraged to work together to improve their learning. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

There is a robust strategy in place to support pupils with additional educational needs in mainstream classes and in the special resource bases. Individual support programmes are prepared and reviewed to help pupils in the SRB classes and in the mainstream classes. These are shared with parents and help pupils make progress.

Effective planning ensures that all pupils have access to an appropriately balanced curriculum. All pupils benefit from good opportunities to integrate with their peers. The Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) provides good support for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).

### **Learning environment: Good**

The school has a very welcoming and caring atmosphere. Staff and pupils recognise and celebrate positively well the wide range of ethnicities and cultures represented in the school community. The school's policies relating to equality are thorough and are well-tailored to the school's needs. Any incidents of bullying or racial abuse are rare, but if they do occur, they are dealt with thoroughly and effectively.

The school has suitable resources to support pupils' learning and makes appropriate use of the Foundation Phase outdoor area. The school makes good use of both ICT suites and halls to enhance pupils' learning.

Classrooms and communal spaces have colourful, interesting and informative displays that generally celebrate pupils' work well. The school building and site are well maintained and used appropriately. The school has an outdoor playground area that is currently underdeveloped.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Good</b>
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### **Leadership: Good**

The headteacher has worked very successfully to establish a shared vision for the new school. She works effectively with a unified senior leadership team that communicates the school's aims effectively to all staff. Many staff at all levels carry leadership roles and responsibilities and they discharge their responsibilities well and contribute effectively to school improvement. The senior leadership team meets regularly to discuss the school's progress and to identify areas in need of further development. There is a good level of teamwork throughout the school. Departmental meetings generally focus well on improving the school's provision, but they do not always give enough focus to the standards pupils achieve.

All staff have relevant and up-to-date job descriptions. Senior leaders organise performance management for teachers and support staff well. They use the outcomes from monitoring to set suitable whole school and individual improvement targets.

The governing body works strategically and was influential in securing a smooth amalgamation of the two former schools. Their committee structure supports the work of the whole governing body well. Governors support and challenge the school effectively. There is excellent communication between the school and its governors. Governors' involvement in self-evaluation activities has enabled a shared understanding of the school's future priorities to develop well.

The school pays good attention to local and national priorities. The whole school training on assessment for learning and thinking skills has helped to bring about greater levels of consistency and understanding between classes. All staff have received update training on the Foundation Phase. This training, along with additional external and internal support, is beginning to secure improvement in the quality of provision in the Foundation Phase.

### **Improving quality: Good**

In a short space of time, the headteacher has put in place comprehensive systems to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. The self-evaluation procedures identify strengths and areas for improvement well. The school takes good account of the views of pupils and parents and acts well on the comments it receives. The self-evaluation report is an accurate reflection of the school's current position. However, the judgements of a few leaders, as part of their on-going reviews, are not always secure enough or focused well enough on pupils' standards.

There are good links between the school self-evaluation report and the school development and curriculum plans. The plans are comprehensive and detailed documents that identify appropriate priorities and include suitable actions and timescales. Many priorities include measurable and specific targets that link well to improving pupils' standards. It is too early for many of the school's actions to have had a positive impact on standards or to have secured consistently good teaching. However, the provision for pupils with additional learning needs has improved significantly and good progress has been made in developing the provision for Welsh.

The school's leaders recognise that teachers are at different stages of development and they tailor their support accordingly. Staff in the Foundation Phase benefit from an additional teacher for two hours per week. This support has enabled them to go into each other's classrooms to teach as a team and to share ideas. Many staff have visited other schools to see good practice. In particular, visits to other schools to discuss approaches to a skills-based curriculum have been very useful in helping staff to agree a whole school approach. The school takes good account of Estyn guidance and best practice case studies.

### **Partnership working: Good**

The school has maintained many of the partnerships of the former infant and junior schools and has also established new and successful relationships that help to improve its provision and standards. The scheme that encourages retired local people into the school to work with pupils has been an important factor in helping to raise standards of reading and pupil confidence. The links with local dance, singing

and sporting organisations have provided useful opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and have given them good opportunities to perform in their local community. The school has effective links with the local authority and acts appropriately on advice given. The school's partnership with parents is good. There are good levels of communication between the school and its partners.

The school works well with the local high school and the other primary schools that feed into it. Through joint workshops, staff across the schools share their knowledge and skills effectively. This helps to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils. The school's transition arrangements for vulnerable pupils are particularly effective and support pupils and their parents well.

### **Resource management: Good**

The school has a large surplus of funds. However, the headteacher and governing body monitor spending effectively and have put in place appropriate spending plans that link well to school improvement priorities. For example, funding has been allocated to improve the school's outside environment, but due to on-going building work this plan has not yet been implemented. The school allocates funding from additional grants well to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of lower achieving pupils.

The school has an appropriate number of staff and deploys them well to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers' planning and preparation time is organised appropriately. The school's resources are generally of good quality and pupils have sufficient resources to help them learn. However, pupils in the Foundation Phase do not always have access to enough resources of good quality in their play activities.

Overall, outcomes for pupils and the quality of provision are good. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

## Appendix 1

### Commentary on performance data

Pupils' performance at the expected outcome (outcome 5) at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2012 places the school in the highest 25% of schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school's performance for the Foundation Phase indicator is above average for similar schools in the family and well above the national average for all schools in Wales. Pupils' outcomes in language, literacy and communication and in mathematical development are above average for similar schools. Pupils' outcomes in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity are similar to the average within the family of schools.

In key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) in English, mathematics and science is above the family of schools' average and the national average. Pupil performance at the expected level shows an upward trend in each of the core subjects. In comparison to schools with similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school performs in the higher 50% for all core subjects combined. Outcomes in English place the school in the higher 50% of similarly proportioned free school meals. Outcomes in mathematics and science in 2012 place the school in the lower 50% of schools with a similar free school meal proportion.

Pupils' performance in areas of learning in the Foundation Phase at the higher than expected outcome (outcome 6) is above the family average and well above the national average. In key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (level 5) is well above the family average and national average.

Girls tend to do better than boys at the expected level for the core subject indicator in key stage 2, but, in 2012, the performance of boys was better than the girls. At the higher than expected level in key stage 2 (level 5), the gap in performance between boys and girls is narrower than the family average. Boys do better than the girls at the higher than expected level.

## Appendix 2

### Stakeholder satisfaction report

#### Learner questionnaires

Ninety-four pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire.

All pupils:

- felt safe and said they were doing well in school; and
- said they knew what to do and whom to ask if they found their work hard.

Most pupils:

- said that they are taught how to keep healthy;
- said that bullying issues are dealt with well;
- said that teachers and other adults help them learn and make progress; and
- feel that there is enough equipment to allow them to do their work.

Many pupils:

- feel that homework helps them understand and improve their work in school;
- say that other children behave well and allow them to get their work done; and
- say that other pupils behave well at play times and lunchtimes.

Pupils' views are generally similar to or slightly more positive than the views of pupils in other schools across Wales.

#### Parent questionnaires

One hundred and thirty-four parents or carers returned the questionnaire.

Nearly all parents:

- are satisfied with the school and feel that it is well run;
- say that their child likes the school and feels safe at school;
- say that staff expect children to do their best and that their child makes good progress at school; and
- say that the school helps their child become more mature and take on responsibility.

Most parents:

- feel that the homework provided builds well on what is taught in school;
- say that their child receives appropriate additional support if required;
- say that there is a good range of activities, including trips and visits; and
- feel that the school prepares pupils well for moving onto the next school.

Many parents:

- say that they are well informed about their child's progress.

The views of parents are generally very positive are generally similar to the views of parents expressed across Wales.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **The inspection team**

Helen Morgan-Rees	Reporting Inspector
Liz Miles	Team Inspector
Buddug Bates	Team Inspector
Julie Price	Lay Inspector
Fiona Arnison	Peer Inspector
Geraldine Foley	School Nominee

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk))

### Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

## **Glossary of terms – Primary**

### **Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)**

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

### **The core subject indicator (CSI)**

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

### **All-Wales Core Data sets**

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.