



# St Margarets CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101233  
**Local Authority** Barking and Dagenham  
**Inspection number** 286001  
**Inspection dates** 16–17 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Malcolm Johnstone

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 address</b>	15-19 North Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Barking
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		IG11 8AS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8594 4003
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	460	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8507 9875
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Brittain
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Ejvet
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is a large, popular primary school serving an area with features of social and economic disadvantage. An above average proportion of pupils are from a variety of minority ethnic groups with the largest group being of Black or Black British-African heritage. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups who are the early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry is typically below average with a full range of ability present. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who have been identified as having learning difficulties or a statement of special need. The previous headteacher moved to a new post last term and the deputy head took over as acting head until the new headteacher was appointed in January 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education within a strong Christian ethos. Despite a dip in standards in 2005, it has maintained high standards over a number of years. The dip was due to a larger than average number of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties and variations in the quality of teaching at that time. The school has the support of the large majority of parents. As one parent wrote, 'It is a privilege to parent a child in this school.'

The high standards result from good teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. This prepares pupils well for their future economic well being. At all stages, pupils achieve well and make good progress in English, mathematics and science. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their good behaviour, attendance, attitudes and enjoyment in learning. These factors make a good contribution to their progress. The well managed Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well and meet the expectations for their age group across all areas of their learning. More should be done, however, to use of the indoor and outdoor environments to encourage exploration and independence.

Leadership and management are good. The leadership team effectively evaluates where improvement is needed and all staff are playing an increasingly influential part in school improvement. The new headteacher is encouraging all staff to critically appraise their own teaching. As a result, they have correctly identified the need to provide pupils with more opportunities to develop learning through enquiry, creativity and problem solving at all stages. The school uses a wide range of data to measure its performance but recognises the need to focus this more sharply on a smaller number of key priorities in the school improvement plan. The vision and commitment of the headteacher, deputy head and staff, ensure that the school is well placed to improve and raise achievement across a broader spectrum of learning. Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection.

The curriculum is good and provides an extensive range of enrichment activities, including some outstanding opportunities to develop skills in music and sport and to take part in inter-school competitions. Standards in music are very high and reflect pupils' love of the subject and high quality specialist teaching. There is a lack of opportunities for pupils to use their good basic skills across all subjects. Pupils have good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and this is promoted well through the regular physical education lessons and the extra-curricular sporting activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is good care, guidance and support and pupils know how to stay safe and what to do should any bullying occur.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Across all subjects and at all stages provide more opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning through enquiry, creativity and problem solving.
- Use the wide range of data and monitoring information more effectively to focus on a smaller number of key priorities in the school improvement plan.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. There was a marked dip in standards at the end of Year 6 in 2005. Despite this dip, standards in the three subjects rose significantly in 2006 and were well above average. The challenging targets set were achieved. Whilst above the national average, standards in writing are not as high as in reading. The school has maintained a trend that has been above average since 2002. Indications from the inspection and school's tracking data suggest standards for 2007 are likely to be maintained at a level above the national average. There is no significant difference in the standards and achievements of the different minority ethnic groups or between boys and girls. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most reach the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. Across the school, the standards achieved are a result of good teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal, development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and attendance is above average. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Racial harmony is strong and pupils say that they all get on well together. The effective links with the local church and numerous fundraising events give pupils a good understanding of how they might contribute to their community. Relationships are good at all levels and most pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. This view is supported by the large majority of parents. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for planning aspects of their own learning. Pupils are very welcoming to visitors and pupils who are new to the school. They respect the code of conduct and behaviour is good. They know how to keep safe and understand what makes a healthy lifestyle, including the dangers of substance abuse. The school council are involved in decision making and are proud of their part in gaining the Healthy Schools award. Pupils' good literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science are good and enable pupils to make good progress. Caring relationships help pupils to feel well supported and they achieve well. The teachers' good subject knowledge and use of language enable pupils to meet their targets and develop high self esteem. Teachers use a good range of assessment information to target groups of pupils for additional support. They use

teaching assistants well to help pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This enables them to succeed in appropriately achievable steps. Teachers expect pupils to present their work well and they respond appropriately. Marking is good and shows pupils how they can improve their work. There is some good investigative and creative teaching that links learning. In the Foundation Stage, staff successfully used drama and role play to sequence events in stories such as 'Bear Hunt' and 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. These opportunities speed their progress and add to pupils' enjoyment across a broader range of learning. However, across all ages, this style of learning is not used enough. This limits opportunities for pupils to share ideas, suggest their own lines of enquiry and take greater responsibility for their own learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

At all stages, the curriculum helps pupils achieve well in their personal development and in acquiring good knowledge in English, mathematics and science. Whilst all other areas of the curriculum are planned for there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independent research or plan aspects of their own learning. The curriculum is enhanced and enriched by a very good range of visits, visitors and after school clubs. These include sports and the arts. Music provision is outstanding and is supported well by specialist teachers. Events such as 'Black History Month' promote pupils' knowledge of other cultures and past historical events well. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and a strong Christian ethos permeates assemblies and lessons.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents trust the school to take care of their children and pupils say an adult is always available if they have any problems or concerns. Systems for supporting pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are good, well managed and enable pupils to make progress towards achieving their targets. Overall there are good systems to assess and track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. This has resulted in good guidance and support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and targeted groups for additional support prior to taking the National Assessment tasks. However, the day-to-day outcomes of classroom assessments are not always used effectively to plan work that is geared to the different needs of the pupils. There are regular risk assessments and child protection arrangements are good. The school works well in partnership with other agencies and schools to support vulnerable pupils and to ensure smooth transition of pupils both in and out of the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and the school has a proven track record of academic success. The newly appointed headteacher and leadership team promote

effective teamwork and good care and support. The capacity to improve is good and there is a clear vision for the future. For example, the leadership team have already prioritised developments in the Foundation Stage and the need to extend the range of teaching strategies to promote independent learning across subjects whilst maintaining high academic standards. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and provides a clear steer in developing collaboration and consistent assessment practice. Accurate self-evaluation is based on a good range of tracking and assessment data. Governors give effective support and provide good challenge. They fulfil their statutory duties well and ensure the views of parents and the community are sought and acted upon.

The school plan guides improvement but is under review to secure precise focus on core priorities. Subject leaders monitor teaching and learning and this is helping them identify the right areas for development. They are excited by the vision to extend the range of teaching and learning styles to help pupils become independent learners who use their initiative and take decisions.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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
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**

Thank you for making us welcome and for your help during your school's inspection. We enjoyed talking to you, visiting lessons and hearing you sing so beautifully. We are pleased that so many of you enjoy school, feel happy and safe and know who to go to if you have a problem. We agree with your parents that your school takes good care of you and is well led and managed. We also think that you are making good progress in English, mathematics and science.

Your school provides a good education. We saw many good lessons and know you enjoy opportunities to use computers, learn to play musical instruments and attend clubs. We are pleased that so many of you are working hard to meet your targets in English and mathematics and thought your work was neatly presented and of good quality. We particularly enjoyed hearing about your achievements locally in music, watching children in the nursery and reception classes taking part in outdoor story activities and hearing about the links you have with your local church. Your new headteacher, teachers and governors know what needs to be done next to help you to build on your good standards.

There are some ways in which we think your learning can improve even more. We have asked your teachers to plan more opportunities for you to decide how to use your good literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects and to share your good ideas through discussion, debate and solving problems. We have also asked your headteacher to draw up a better plan of how your school can improve even more.

Malcolm Johnstone (Lead Inspector)