

# Millpond Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109137
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	356481
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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>	279
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Drummond
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Wyatt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Baptist Street Bristol BS5 0YR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed 13 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 37 parents and carers and 45 pupils. ♦

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress in English.
- How well teaching takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils and helps all pupils to improve their attainment and progress.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in motivating and inspiring all pupils and providing challenge and interest for them.
- How well the school supports those pupils who join the school midway through a school year, those new to speaking English and those with particularly low levels of prior attainment.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders and the governing body in monitoring and evaluating achievement and the quality of teaching and learning and in contributing to school improvement.

## Information about the school

This school is larger than most other primary schools. A very high proportion of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being pupils of Black or Black British-African heritage. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very high. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, is below average. Their needs relate mainly to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at various stages of the year is above average. There have been frequent changes in the leadership of the school over the past four years and the current headteacher has been in post since September 2009.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

This satisfactory school is moving quickly in the right direction under the purposeful leadership of its highly effective headteacher. Pupils are happy, confident and have positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. One pupil reflected the views of many when saying: 'This school is amazing. It's like one family here.' Parents are supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school.

Pupils join the school with levels of skills and abilities that are exceptionally low. They make good progress through the Nursery and Reception classes but progress is inconsistent in the main school where it is satisfactory overall. Results in national tests are getting better year on year in mathematics and English but, generally, have been much lower than average. This is because many pupils find higher level reading and writing skills very difficult. Given the very low starting points of many pupils and the much higher than usual proportion of pupils who are new to learning English, they make the progress expected of them and a growing number make good progress. The quality of learning and progress is improving securely and quickly

Teaching is successful in helping the pupils to move forward at the expected rate and, in a growing number of classes, particularly effective teaching results in learning that leads to pupils making good progress. In others, the focus on all pupils' learning is not as sharp. Consequently, not all year groups are making progress beyond that expected to ensure that attainment rises rapidly. In particular, in some lessons, pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher talk, with limited opportunities to work with each other or on their own. In addition, activities are not always closely matched to the capabilities of different pupils. The curriculum ensures that learning is very meaningful and great fun. It usually matches pupils' needs well.

Pupils' personal skills are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour is good and is promoted by a shared set of values based on care and consideration throughout the school. Sensitive and vigilant pastoral care ensures that by the time pupils leave in Year 6 they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school.

The school has gone through a difficult few years. There has been considerable turnover of staff and this, together with frequent changes in the leadership of the school, has interrupted the pace of improvement. The new headteacher provides exceptionally strong and clear-sighted leadership and has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion. She has established a very positive ethos and her skills, knowledge and experience of school improvement give the senior team a clear insight and direction which are resulting in the strong improvements in progress that are evident in many pupils' work. The headteacher has focused strongly on improving areas of weakness in the

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teaching and makes effective use of coaching and additional support where necessary. This is beginning to have the intended impact on pupils' progress.

The governing body supports the school well and plays a key role in promoting effective safeguarding and good links with parents. However, they have yet to evaluate the work of the school fully and systematically or to play an active part in setting school priorities. There is a strong and growing sense of teamwork and pride in what has been achieved in a short period of time. School self-evaluation is highly accurate and the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey of improvement. The successful action taken by leaders to ensure improvement in pupils' attainment and progress means the capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

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

- Raise attainment so that most pupils reach the expected levels in English and mathematics by further developing their reading, writing and comprehension skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the overwhelming majority of lessons in all year groups by:
  - making sure that there is a sharper match of work to pupils' different abilities
  - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.
- Ensure that all governors have the skills, expertise and confidence to enable them to play a robust and strong role in shaping the strategic direction of the school and in holding the school to account for its work.

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

**3**

The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of satisfactory and improving progress. From very low starting points when they enter the school, pupils are making secure progress and achieving satisfactorily. Progress is held back in English because of the difficulty many pupils have in explaining their ideas when they have read a text, which in turn inhibits their ability to write well. Initiatives such as Reading Recovery, Number Counts and one-to-one tuition are helping small groups and individual pupils who are falling behind to make up lost ground.

Most lessons are well organised so that pupils learn and make the progress expected. However, some lessons are not as sharply focused on learning as others. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, clear steps to success helped pupils to structure their learning and make good progress, whereas in the introduction to a number activity in Year 2, too little account was taken of what pupils' had achieved in the last lesson. As a result, not enough emphasis was placed on what the pupils needed to do to enhance their learning and make good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that attainment has improved strongly compared to previous years but is still below average. Some variation in progress remains, but overall it is increasing securely and at a faster rate among older pupils.

The school works very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment and the high number who are new to learning English. Detailed plans to support these groups,

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coupled with thoughtful deployment of learning assistants and timely interventions, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and an appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. They contribute to discussions and often respond to their teacher's questions with enthusiasm. They concentrate well on the tasks their teachers set them. As a result, current progress and learning are improving securely. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. This, together with their improving standards in the key skills in English and mathematics, means that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stages of their lives.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers are confident and knowledgeable. They create a well-ordered and calm environment. Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them make sense of their learning. In many lessons, pupils benefit from teachers who have high expectations for pupils' learning and therefore make good progress. However, a variation in the quality of teaching between some classes is preventing pupils' progress from being consistently good. In the less effective lessons progress is held back because:

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- teachers do not plan adequately for the range of abilities in the class or build on pupils' prior knowledge, with the result that a minority of pupils are either not challenged enough or struggle to comprehend
- teachers sometimes talk too much which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning, resulting in slower progress and less time for pupils to articulate and build upon what they have learnt by the end of the lesson.

The school has set up very thorough systems to check on pupils' progress which are beginning to be used well to ensure that none is in danger of falling behind and to enable teachers to consistently set the next steps for each pupil's learning. They are also used well to identify strengths and areas for development in curriculum provision.

The curriculum is well organised and extensively enriched by visits to places of interest, events at school and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many of these opportunities add to the good progress that pupils make in their broader personal development. The school is making increasing use of a range of strategies and intervention programmes outside normal school hours.

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school's strong emphasis on promoting pupils' emotional well-being results in them feeling secure. Induction programmes are outstanding for those who arrive throughout the year. Those who have a statement of special educational needs or speak English as an additional language receive carefully tailored support which allows them to benefit from lessons in mainstream classes. Links between the language support staff, the special needs coordinator and the teachers are particularly effective in ensuring that these pupils play a full part in all aspects of the life of the school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Progress and learning are improving because of the drive to raise attainment. Although there have been many changes of staff in the recent past that have interrupted progress, the determination to improve is secure. Weaker teaching has been tackled so as to ensure that pupils make at least the expected progress and there is a clear ambition to make sure that all lessons are good. Subject leaders monitor the pupils' work systematically. Under the guidance of the headteacher this has become more incisive and teachers receive frequent feedback about where improvements can be made.

The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff. All safeguarding arrangements were found to be effective at the time of

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the inspection. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school's work. The governing body has a range of experience which assists the school. Governors are very supportive but lack the expertise to be sufficiently involved in prioritising plans for improving the school. Their approach to evaluating the effectiveness of some policies and procedures and the progress made by pupils is not yet rigorous enough.

In this highly inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school works very well in partnership with external agencies to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. Community cohesion is good. The school develops pupils' understanding of their religious, ethnic and socio-economic community well. Leaders have ensured that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common, shared values is embedded in every pupil.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle into the Nursery quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. Staff provide well for children's welfare. In class, children have access to a varied range of activities, which support their personal development as well as their communication, language and literacy skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Phonics (the learning of letters and sounds) are taught daily and as a result children make good progress in speaking and writing.

All adults make observations of children and assess their learning carefully although this information is not always used rigorously to ensure that next steps in learning are sharply focused on children's differing needs. By the end of their Reception Year, most children



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are well below the standards expected for their age in most areas but this represents good progress given their very low starting points. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership to her team. She has a very secure understanding of the early years' curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive good-quality care and support.

*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

Although a much lower than average number of parents returned the questionnaire, the school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of those parents and carers who did. The few criticisms were followed up as inspection trails during the visit. For instance, a small minority of parents and carers raised concerns regarding the help the school gave to pupils to enable them to lead healthy lives. Inspectors found, through discussion with a wide range of pupils and through lesson observations, that most pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy but do not always put this into practice. The views of the parents interviewed informally at the beginning and end of the school day confirm the positive responses in the questionnaires.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Millpond 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 inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 279 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	68	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	73	9	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	57	14	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	49	17	46	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	35	22	59	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	32	23	62	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	49	15	41	3	8	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)	12	32	18	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	32	23	62	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	57	15	41	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	27	24	65	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	51	16	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	38	21	57	0	0	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.**



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Millpond Primary School, Bristol, BS5 0YR

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Millpond is a satisfactory school, which is improving quickly. It has many good features and you are right to be proud of it, although there are some things that it can still do better.

Your personal development is good. You behave well around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult. You make satisfactory progress as you move through the school and your achievement is getting better, particularly in mathematics. Your teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.

Your headteacher and all your other teachers know how to make sure that your school continues to get even better. To help them to do this, we have asked your school to do the following things.

- Ensure that more of you do better in the tests you take at the end of Year 6.
- Make sure that in all lessons, teachers plan activities that challenge you.
- Give you more opportunities to learn for yourself in lessons.
- Make sure that governors are in a good position to monitor the impact of school policies and help the school plan for the future.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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