

Little Milton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123198
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359389
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Jones
Headteacher	Eve Hunter
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2008
School address	Stadhampton Road Oxfordshire Ox OX44 7QD
Telephone number	01844 279310
Fax number	01844 279310
Email address	office.3755@little-milton.oxon.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed four teaching staff while visiting twelve lessons or parts of lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff, parents, carers and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, the governing body minutes, arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Pupil and staff questionnaires were also scrutinised, along with 46 completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress made by pupils, particularly boys, in their writing.
- The progress made by pupils in mathematics.
- The pupils' awareness of pupils from different backgrounds in the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

Little Milton is a much smaller-than-average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have mild learning difficulties. Children in the Reception year are taught alongside pupils in Year 1.

The school has Healthy School status and has gained the Activemark and Silver Eco awards.

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

Little Milton provides a good education for its pupils. There are a number of outstanding features, not least of which is the pupils' behaviour which contributes significantly to their good achievement. Parents and carers think highly of the school and the remarks of one are typical when commenting, 'The small classes and family atmosphere have given them a happy and inspiring start and they have all flourished both socially and academically.' Another concurred with the inspectors' views of the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils when commenting, 'We paid a visit to the school and were delighted when my child was offered a place in Reception because I could not imagine her being better looked after. My expectations have been exceeded in every way.'

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress well in all areas of learning. Consistently good progress throughout the rest of the school ensures that pupils achieve well and that their attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. Many pupils do particularly well in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and some attain significantly above average by the end of Year 6 in both English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress, the result of the early identification of their needs and particularly effective, well-targeted support by teachers and support assistants. There is no significant difference in the achievement made by boys and girls in any subject.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide constructive information to pupils in how they might improve their work. They have excellent relationships with the pupils and this encourages pupils to work hard and to do their best. Teachers use assessment information well to plan work that is matched to the differing abilities of pupils. However, occasionally, a small number of the most able do not progress as quickly as they might. This is because they are not always encouraged to undertake more challenging work sooner in lessons, and to be more responsible for determining the pace of their learning. Pupils really enjoy all aspects of school and this is reflected in their attendance which is much higher than the national average. The wide range of visits, visitors and clubs adds considerably to the curriculum. For example, pupils work with chefs from a local restaurant and this significantly enhances their awareness of the variety of healthy foods and its preparation.

The school leaders are well supported by the governing body in their drive to improve further the quality of provision. Self-evaluation is accurate and the leadership at all levels has an accurate picture of the areas for development. Improved monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress have resulted in early interventions to avoid underachievement. This, along with improvements since the previous inspection, demonstrates the school is well placed to sustain further improvement. The school's effective safeguarding procedures help to ensure pupils feel exceptionally safe in school, a view endorsed by the parents and

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carers. Community cohesion planning is good and enhances the pupils' awareness of people from other backgrounds locally and abroad. However, leaders rightly recognise the pupils are not sufficiently aware of the diversity of people's backgrounds in the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - allowing pupils, particularly the more able, to move on to activities sooner and not always being required to listen to all of the teacher's introductions.
- Broaden pupils' awareness and understanding of people from other cultures, religions and backgrounds in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected for their age. However, small numbers in cohorts means that this varies year on year. The Reception year children make good progress in all areas of learning and are well prepared for entry into Year 1. The regular teaching of letter sounds and blends provides pupils with a secure foundation for the development of reading skills, which progress particularly well. Observation of learning in classrooms shows that pupils make consistently good progress in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. Although more able pupils progress well, they could make better progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well, as do the very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language. While occasionally there are differences in the rate of progress between boys and girls, these are usually due to individual differences in pupils' ability. Pupils' speaking skills are particularly strong, aided by the opportunities to respond to questions in class. Writing skills develop well; pupils write at length for a range of purposes and demonstrate secure grammatical skills. For example, good progress was observed in a Year 5/6 poetry lesson, where pupils' use of similes and metaphors developed well and their responses to questioning showed a good knowledge of personification. Scientific skills improve well. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson pupils' ability to construct electrical circuits improved quickly, the result of well-planned activities for them to find things out for themselves.

Pupils' above average basic skills, good information and communication technology skills and their desire to take on responsibility, such as their drive to improve the school's eco-friendliness, prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils' attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is well above average. Pupils are polite, mature beyond their years and cooperate very well with one another. They say they feel extremely safe and that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work as mediators, helping fellow pupils who might have concerns. There is an excellent focus on encouraging healthy lifestyles, which has led to the school being awarded Healthy School status and the Activemark. Most pupils eat healthily and participate well in the good range of sporting activities on offer. Older pupils contribute to this aspect well through acting as sports leaders.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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 have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and they engage them well through enthusiastic teaching. Their questioning skills are exceptionally good, ensuring pupils consider their responses carefully. Pupils know what they have to do to improve their work because teachers provide them with good feedback through constructive and informative marking. Teachers make good use of detailed assessment information when planning lessons so that teaching is pitched at the correct level and accelerates pupils' progress. Occasionally, however, teachers miss the opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning, for example by finding things out for themselves. Teachers make very effective use of teaching assistants to help those pupils who need extra help with their learning.

The curriculum is well planned so that it caters well for the interests of all groups of pupils. For example, teachers focused effectively on improving boys' writing through its history topic on the Second World War. There is a strong focus on ensuring pupils eat healthily. Work with a local restaurant has fired the pupils' enthusiasm to produce vegetables in their own garden beds, the produce being used in cookery lessons or, in times of plenty, being sold to parents and carers. The curriculum is enhanced through the teaching of French in all classes, instrumental tuition and visiting sports coaches as well as many visits, visitors and clubs. The school provides very well-targeted support for

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potentially vulnerable pupils, ensuring they are able to take a full part in all aspects of school life. Over the last year, the school has developed a much improved and reliable system to identify how well pupils are progressing in English and mathematics. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are encouraged effectively to achieve well, which they do.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher ensures there is drive to improve and embed ambition through the implementation of the school's clear improvement plan to which all of the staff subscribe. Self-evaluation procedures are robust and priorities for development arise effectively from this rigorous analysis. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning effectively and is strengthening the skills of senior staff in monitoring the quality of learning. The performance management of staff is fully implemented. Governors are regular visitors to the school, know its strengths and weaknesses and support the school well. The school has successfully consolidated the good outcomes seen at the time of the previous inspection. The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress have developed and been used to improve progress in both English and mathematics. The personalised information is used effectively to ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination.

Links with parents and carers are excellent. Parents and carers are involved fully in the life of the school and their children's education. The school has created a range of good partnerships. Strong links with the local cluster of primary schools and with a school in South Africa add considerably to the pupils' experiences. Senior staff promote community cohesion well. However, pupils' awareness of other backgrounds in this country is not as strong as other aspects and the school acknowledges the need to evaluate the impact of its community cohesion plan more fully. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were rigorous. There are careful checks on those adults who work in school and regular health and safety checks.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well to school life, aided by the excellent partnerships with parents and carers. They are most polite and behave exceptionally well. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in the good range of activities that are available. Children were keen to talk about the gardening they were undertaking and how they were going to compost some of the weeds. They are happy to work in groups, but show good concentration when working on activities by themselves. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is above average.

Staff interact with children well and encourage them in their work. Planning enables staff to focus on their individual needs. Those children who have specific learning or physical needs are extremely well looked after, enabling them to participate in all activities. Staff work very well together, ensuring that activities are sufficiently challenging for children in the Reception class and those in Year 1. Teachers assess children's progress regularly and systematically, but they rightly recognise that they could involve parents and carers more in the process.

The curriculum provides good opportunities for children to extend their experiences outdoors. A good approach to the learning of letter sounds and blends provides the children with a secure base for their early reading and writing skills. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A high proportion of the parents and carers responded to the questionnaire and the overwhelming majority indicated they are satisfied with all aspects of the school and the quality of education it provides for their children. There were no areas of significant concern identified by parents and carers. A considerable number wrote comments expressing their great satisfaction with how the staff care for their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Milton Church of England 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 68 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	87	5	11	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	85	7	15	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	59	17	37	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	63	15	33	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	74	11	24	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	65	15	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	70	14	30	0	0	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)	28	61	10	22	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	72	11	24	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	78	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	70	14	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	85	7	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	85	7	15	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Little Milton Church of England Primary School, Little Milton OX44 7QD

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you work and play. This letter is to tell you what we found and what we have asked the school to do to become even better.

You are very polite and we were pleased to note your outstanding behaviour and how well you worked with one another. You are keen to take responsibility and do much to support your school and the local community.

You are provided with a good education so that you attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Children in the Reception class are provided with a good start and make good progress. The teachers work hard to ensure that all of you make good progress. Those of you who find learning a little difficult are given lots of guidance that helps you to do well. Occasionally, we think some of you who at times might find work a little easy could do even better and we have asked the school to help you do so. We have also asked the teachers to give you more opportunities to find out things for yourselves.

There are many interesting things for you to do and you have lots of visits and visitors that make your work more interesting. You have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily and you are keen to take part in the many sporting activities on offer. You learn about different religions and we are pleased that you help your friends who are at school in South Africa. We have asked the school to help you find out more about people from different backgrounds in this country. The staff look after you very well and you know how to keep safe.

Those in charge of the school are working hard to make it better. You can help by telling your teachers if you find work a little easy.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector

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