

Milton St John's CofE Primary School

Mill Lane, Mossley, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL5 0BN

Inspection dates 8–9 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and significantly above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and their behaviour is good.
- Teaching is good and pupils are keen to learn. In most lessons, teachers expect the best of pupils' work and behaviour.
- Senior leaders and governors have ensured that, despite staff changes, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always use accurate information about what pupils have already learned to plan lessons which get the best out of them.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough time to practise their reading, writing and mathematics skills in different subjects.
- Action plans for school improvement do not always focus on improving pupils' achievement.
- Subject leaders do not have enough time to check pupils' learning in different subjects.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor space has limited resources.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, two of which were joint observations with senior leaders, listened to pupils reading individually and in classes and checked the quality of pupils' work in their books.
- They held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- They checked school documents relating to safeguarding, how well pupils are doing in their work and the ways in which the school checks on pupils' learning.
- The inspectors took account of the 37 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own parental survey.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Gaunt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The percentage of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The governing body manages a playgroup which was observed during the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make outstanding progress in their learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers use accurate information about what pupils have already learned in order to plan lessons which get the best out of them in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers give pupils enough time to practise skills of reading, writing and mathematics in different subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership at all levels by:
 - making sure the plans for school improvement clearly identify how moving pupils' achievement from good to outstanding will take place
 - giving subject leaders more time to check on how well pupils are achieving in different subjects
 - improving the outdoor resources for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally start school with skills which are typical for their age. They settle well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in their learning because of the strong links forged between the school, parents and the playgroup. As a result children are confident and ready to learn when they start school. However, limited outdoor resources restrict the opportunities the children have to achieve as well as they could physically and independently.
- Pupils' achievement is good rather than outstanding in Years 1 and 2. This is because information relating to their progress is not always accurate and lessons planned do not consistently challenge all pupils to achieve their best. However, the strong focus given to regular reading sessions and daily knowledge of letters and sounds to help them read unfamiliar words means pupils' reading skills are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2.
- The standard and rate of pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6 have remained significantly above average in recent years. Despite this, pupils' achievement is good and not outstanding overall because they do not always have enough opportunities to practise their reading, writing and mathematics skills in different subjects. This means that they do not consistently reach the highest standards in these subjects in all classes.
- Learning in Years 1 to 6 is good with some examples of outstanding learning. It is particularly strong when lessons are exciting and capture pupils' imaginations. For instance, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils' learning was rapid because the teachers' searching questions, the demonstration of excellent writing and the very good use of exciting and stimulating resources ensured that pupils' writing was of high quality for their age.
Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as other pupils because of the good support they are given in lessons and the equal opportunities they are given to achieve well.
- Parents are generally pleased with the progress their children make and particularly with the support provided for their children's well-being.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good and at times outstanding teaching contributes well to pupils' good achievement in all classes. This view is supported by parents, who unanimously agree that teaching is of a good quality throughout the school.
- Through skilful questioning, creative and exciting topics that interest the children, adults successfully extend children's speaking, listening and creative skills within the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, because there are limited outdoor resources children have too few opportunities to develop their physical skills and independence outside the classroom.
- In the best lessons, teachers make sure all pupils are given work that gets the most out of them. In such lessons, teachers set high expectations of behaviour and work and pupils know clearly what is expected of them. Pupils know fully how they can succeed in their learning because teachers check on their understanding and change tasks and the way they teach to make sure that pupils are always challenged to do their best work.
- This was observed in a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson as pupils worked with partners to construct complex spread sheets. They used previously learned calculation skills together with new information learned in the lesson to complete the task very successfully. Marking and regular homework are used well to help pupils to improve their work. In the best lessons, time is provided for pupils to look at their own work critically and to follow up on teachers' comments.
- Occasionally, pupils do not learn as well as they could. This is because teachers do not always use what they know about what pupils already understand, to plan lessons which challenge them to achieve the best they can.

- The teaching of pupils who are eligible for the pupil-premium funding is managed well with well-planned and exciting resources available and good use of support staff to ensure all these pupils achieve well.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good because all adults, and particularly the skilled teaching assistants, ensure pupils receive appropriate support specific to their needs. As a result all pupils have equal opportunities and potential discrimination is tackled well.
- Teachers make a strong contribution to the good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with pupils from a wide range of different cultures, good quality teaching of drama, music and sports promote enjoyment of learning and give pupils a good range of experiences which prepare them well for their future lives.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, they very much enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils are particularly pleased when their classmates experience success.
- Inspectors' observations and school records show that behaviour is typically good in classes, around the school and over time. Pupils enjoy school and say that bad behaviour never spoils lessons. Behaviour observed by inspectors in lessons was good and sometimes outstanding. This has a positive effect on pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils feel strongly that the school belongs to them and enthusiastically welcome the numerous responsibilities given to them, such as being school councillors, buddies or Eco leaders. Such roles enable them to learn to act responsibly and to support each other well.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Parents fully agree with this view. They are very supportive of the school and no concerns were raised concerning their children's well-being or safety.
- Teachers insist that pupils behave according to the school's rules. This results in pupils behaving well.
- Systems for recording and for following up incidents of poor behaviour are consistent and secure. Strong links with social services and other educational partners ensure all pupils and their families are given appropriate support and guidance.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and understand how to keep safe. They say teachers and support staff have helped them to understand how to take care on the roads, by the canal or when using the internet.
- Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and feel that they should support those they believe are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils treat each other fairly and with respect. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and say staff deal swiftly and effectively with any incidents that arise.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage care and welfare are good. The children share equipment well, take turns and are happy to talk about their learning. However, outdoor resources are limited.

The leadership and management are good

- Despite past staffing changes the school has continued to improve since the last inspection. Senior leaders and governors have ensured pupils' good and at times outstanding achievement.
- Senior leaders work closely with staff and identify actions that will improve the school further. However, it is not always crystal clear from these how improving pupils' achievement from good to outstanding will take place.
- Staff say they value the support they receive from managers and how the training they receive helps them to improve their own' and pupils' performance. Staff work closely with each other to

review and check on pupils' progress. However, subject leaders do not have enough opportunities to check on pupils' achievement in different subjects.

- Leaders have accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and have brought about good improvements where necessary. This is shown by improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement throughout the school. This shows that leaders know how to make the school even more successful.
- Senior leaders and staff work effectively to ensure that all pupils have every opportunity to learn without discrimination. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development well. The effective curriculum gives pupils some good opportunities to reflect on their work, relationships and behaviour.
- Parents say they are well informed about the work of the school because of the regular newsletters, parents' meetings and the information they receive on the high quality school website. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and parents expressed no concerns about their children's safety.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school works well with the governors who are motivated, well trained and actively involved in the school's work. Governors have managed staffing changes well. They provide good support and challenge to senior leaders, based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement. The governing body makes careful financial decisions, including ensuring that the pupil-premium funding is used well to increase the support provided for the pupils concerned.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	106234
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	403005

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Maher
Headteacher	Lisa Gallaher
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2008
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