

Mount Pleasant Junior School

Mount Pleasant Road, Southampton, SO14 0WZ

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

This is a good school.

- Mount Pleasant is an improving school. It has successfully addressed all the areas for development identified at the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good and all teachers carefully monitor pupil progress.
- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The number of pupils achieving expected levels has significantly increased since the last inspection and is now in line with the national average.
- The school is well led and managed; senior leaders are focused on improving pupils' achievement and make regular checks on the quality of teaching.
- The school is a very inclusive community and all faiths and cultures are respected.
- Pupils are happy at school. They feel valued and enjoy the fact that the school takes their views seriously.
- Attendance and punctuality have improved. Attendance rates are now above average.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and enjoy learning which contribute well to their good achievement.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides a range of activities that children enjoy.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough to ensure that pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- There are not enough opportunities for the most-able pupils to learn independently.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels, particularly in reading, is below average.
- Middle leaders are not given enough responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to phonics sessions (in which pupils are taught about the way sounds and letters are linked) and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and the home-school link worker. The Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors were interviewed. A representative from the local authority was also interviewed.
- There were no responses to the on-line Parent View survey. Inspectors held informal discussions with parents in the playground before and after school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including improvement planning and records of pupils' progress and attainment.
- The views of the 14 staff who completed the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Margaret Faull

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mount Pleasant School is an average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government) is above the national average.
- Almost all of the pupils are from minority ethnic heritages, with the largest groups being from India and Pakistan heritage. There are also increasing numbers of pupils from Eastern Europe. The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language, with many at an early stage of learning English. There are twenty five languages or dialects spoken in the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - providing more opportunities for higher ability pupils to learn independently
 - providing more opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice, both within the school and in other schools.
- Strengthen the leadership and management team in the school by:
 - enabling middle leaders to take on greater responsibility.
- Increase the proportions of pupils attaining the higher levels, particularly in reading, by:
 - monitoring guided reading sessions more closely to ensure all pupils are being stretched
 - linking guided reading more closely with phonics teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils join the school with skills and knowledge below that expected for their age, particularly in writing and reading. They make good progress and by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Too few pupils reach standards that are above average particularly in reading.
- The trend of improvement over recent years has been achieved by a consistent effort by all staff to meet the challenging progress targets for pupils. The school is successful at narrowing gaps in attainment and there are no significant differences in achievement between any groups of pupils. Every half term the school monitors the progress of all pupils and well-targeted intervention sessions ensure that any pupil falling behind is well supported.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those who join the school part way through a year, also make good progress because of the extra support they receive.
- The impact of the pupil premium has been effective. Some of the funding has been used to provide dedicated teachers for one-to-one tuition. The school can clearly demonstrate the impact of these intervention sessions and pupils who are eligible are making good progress in reading, writing and numeracy.
- The large number of pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is because their needs are identified quickly and good quality personalised support is provided.
- In lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made good progress when tasks were well matched to their learning needs and collaborative group work was actively encouraged. In a Year 6 lesson pupils enjoyed acting out the various punctuation signs to the rest of the class.
- Most pupils say that they enjoy reading. A structured programme to teach phonics is newly in place and operates well. However, it is not yet closely linked with guided reading. Although occasional assessments in guided reading are carried out to determine what pupils have achieved, these are not frequent enough, and work in guided reading sessions is not always challenging enough to ensure that pupils make rapid progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are very aware of how their pupils are learning and are focused on maximising progress. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 4, the well planned activities were carefully matched to the pupils' ability with the result that all pupils made excellent progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked so that the pupils know how to improve. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are adept at assessing their own work alongside their teachers to identify the next steps in their learning. Pupils are aware of the levels that they are working at and what they need to achieve to reach the next level.
- Much teaching is of a fast pace and meets the needs of all pupils. For example, in an outstanding Year 3 mathematics lesson the teacher quickly adapted the plans to accelerate learning for all pupils. Where teaching is less effective it is characterised by a slower pace and insufficient opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to explore their learning independently.
- Teachers give pupils exciting experiences. For example, pupils were delighted to explore an interactive model of the Mary Rose and enjoyed questioning visitors on the life and times of the ship.
- Most teachers use questioning well to explore pupils' understanding and to develop their learning. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide effective high quality teaching assistants who monitor and track the progress of their pupils closely in small intervention sessions. Effective deployment

of a bilingual teaching assistant ensures that the needs of those who speak English as an additional language are well met.

- The teaching and support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are consistent and effective. In intervention sessions, clear targets and a range of interesting activities make sure that all progress at a good pace.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Typically, behaviour over time both in lessons and around the school is good. Children show pride in the fact that those of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds get on so well together and this promotes their social and cultural development.
- In lessons pupils work hard and enjoy their learning. Only rarely was behaviour seen to lapse and this was when the pace of learning was too slow to maintain the interest of the pupils.
- Attendance rates are now above the national figures for primary schools because of rigorous action taken by senior leaders to reduce absence levels. There are very low levels of exclusion. Punctuality has considerably improved and the impact of this is that children have a positive start to their day.
- Pupils have a good grasp of how to keep themselves safe, both on the internet and outside of the home and school. Any bullying is dealt with well and pupils are aware of the different types of bullying. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously on the school council. Recently they investigated bullying by devising a questionnaire for all pupils to complete. The findings will be reported back to staff and the school intends to re-write the anti-bullying policy in the light of the pupils' comments.
- Year 6 pupils appreciate the opportunities to develop their independence. This includes setting up lunchtime clubs for Year 3 and 4 pupils; one very successful club is the well-attended craft club. Other pupils select a charity to support and run fundraising activities. Pupils celebrated their successful fundraising for Help the Aged by inviting their grandparents to afternoon tea at the school. These initiatives have a positive impact on social development. Pupils also have clear moral views about what is right and wrong.
- Staff in the home-school link project, which is partially funded by the pupil premium, work very closely with families. Their role is to work with underachieving children and families to support learning and attendance. There has recently been a well-received training event for parents to support children who find reading more difficult.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the school is focused on raising achievement. Effective systems have been put in place to ensure that progress is good and standards are in line with national averages. Now the school has achieved this benchmark, it has created a detailed plan for further sustained improvement with the specific aim of increasing the proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels.
- The leadership team rigorously monitors pupils' achievement by regularly analysing progress data. The team carries out regular lesson observations, looks at pupils work and checks teachers' planning. These systems are also used to identify accurately the training needs for teachers and other staff. The need for teachers to observe outstanding practice both within and outside of the school has already been identified.
- The responsibilities of leaders at various levels are not shared out effectively. Not enough roles and responsibilities are taken on by middle leaders. The impact of this is that senior leaders, particularly the headteacher, are overburdened.
- Effective performance management procedures ensure that the national Teachers' Standards are met and link the impact of teaching on the progress of pupils. This enables senior leaders to make fair decisions about pay progression for staff.
- The leadership team is effective at using pupil premium funding. The impact of the various

intervention sessions and bilingual support has been proved to be effective. Many eligible pupils have made more than expected progress. The school has also effectively targeted the money to provide high quality pastoral support for those who are more vulnerable. Senior leaders are effective in ensuring all pupils take a full part in all school activities and that there is no discrimination.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is well supported through the curriculum which provides pupils interesting activities through various themes. Tolerance and understanding of different cultures are well supported throughout the school
- The school is becoming increasingly successful in engaging parents and carers. It works closely to ensure parents understand how subjects are taught and how parents can support their child's learning at home. Parents who were met at the end of the day are very supportive of the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a professional approach to budget monitoring, including the use of the pupil premium to ensure pupils make good progress. Governors regularly receive updates from the headteacher regarding the high expectations of teachers regarding pupil progress. They have a clear awareness of performance management and how that links to salary and promotion of staff. However, due to some recent staff changes, not all are fully aware of the quality of teaching in individual classes. The governing body has a clear understanding of the data and comparative performance of the school. It ensures that all safeguarding procedures are effective. Governors have attended training that ensures they are able to carry out their roles well.

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	116092
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	401558

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rashid Brora
Headteacher	Rob Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 May 2010
Telephone number	02380 223624
Fax number	02380 480020
Email address	info@mountpleasant.southampton.sch.uk

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