

# Mount Wise Community Primary School

James Street, Plymouth, PL1 4LA

**Inspection dates** 4–5 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although pupils have a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching in the rest of the school is not consistently good. This is having the effect of slowing the pace of learning and not securing good achievement for all pupils.
- Some teachers are not responding quickly enough in lessons to move pupils onto work better suited to their ability and extend the learning for the most able.
- A few teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement are not high enough and so pupils make, at best, adequate progress in their classes. This is often reflected in lessons that lack pace, and teachers demonstrating a misunderstanding of how pupils learn best.
- Leaders are not responding quickly enough to improve the quality of teaching. They are not applying enough rigour to their monitoring, enabling them to take swift and effective actions to eradicate weak teaching.
- The governing body is not probing well enough the links between the quality of teaching and pupils' performance to effectively support school leaders in challenging underperformance.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils do well in the Nursery and Reception classes because teaching is good and their teachers have high expectations.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular and consistently undertaken by teachers. The next step comments provide pupils with opportunities to learn by thinking for themselves.
- Pupils with a disability or special educational needs achieve well as support and intervention activities are well targeted and delivered by capable teaching assistants.
- Pupils really enjoy school and feel safe. Their behaviour is good and they are respectful of each other and their teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed 13 teachers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined inspectors for a number of observations.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- The inspectors took account of the three responses to the on-line Parent View survey and the 31 responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection.

## Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Mount Wise is an average-sized primary school. Pupil numbers are rising slowly as the school grows to a two-form-entry primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the remaining pupils are from several different minority ethnic backgrounds. A smaller than average proportion of pupils have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is extra money given to schools by the government to support, amongst others, pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils every day and provides a social start to the day; there is no alternative provision.
- The school is due to join The South West Plymouth Education Trust at the end of December 2012. At the same time the school will assume foundation status.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better to improve pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that teachers plan sufficiently challenging work, especially for the more able pupils, and that tasks reflect accurately their interests, strengths and aspirations for the future
  - increasing the pace of learning in lessons
  - raise teachers' understanding and awareness of exactly what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring teachers use information about the progress of individual pupils during lessons to reshape tasks and so improve learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at the school by:
  - increasing the capacity of school leaders to develop more rigour within the system to monitor the quality of teaching and take more rapid and effective action to eradicate weak teaching
  - ensuring that all governors have a good understanding of the links between the quality of teaching and the performance of pupils
  - improving the capacity of governance to fully support school leaders in their quest to challenge underperformance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not fast enough to result in good achievement. This is as a direct result of the quality of teaching at the school, which is inconsistent. Too many teachers are not delivering good quality lessons and as a result pupils' progress is at best adequate. However, some better teaching is reversing this, leading to overall levels of attainment that are below average at the end of Year 6.
- The amount of progress pupils make in the different years is too variable. Too few pupils exceed the expected rate of progress because of the inconsistencies in the quality of learning where teaching lacks pace and challenge, especially for the more able pupils. However, in contrast, there is a faster pace of learning in some classes where progress is accelerated with some inspirational teaching and is ensuring that all pupils make at least expected progress in communication, reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- When children join the Nursery class their skills and knowledge are generally well below what would normally be expected for their age.
- A good understanding of the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that they make good progress in Nursery and Reception but enter Key Stage 1 with levels of skill that are still slightly below what would normally be expected.
- The progress of pupils with a disability or special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language is at least in line with all other pupils, and in many cases better. This has been secured by some carefully planned activities, both in and out of lessons, that are taught well by some good teaching assistants.
- Targeted support for pupils who receive pupil premium funding has enabled them to make similar progress to their peers. This is because the school has increased staffing specifically to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The teaching of linking letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and effective. This is ensuring that the children have a secure grounding to their reading and writing skills. Regular guided reading sessions across the school are supporting the drive to sustain this progress across the school, but achievement in reading by the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school requires improvement to reach at least average levels.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement to make it consistently good as pupils in some classes are underachieving.
- While there is some more effective teaching, too much still requires improvement and is not yet strong enough to ensure that enough pupils make rapid progress. There are still too many lessons where pupils are not being moved quickly onto tasks that challenge them and help them learn well. This is especially the case for the higher ability pupils and often is as a result of the teacher not having high enough expectations of the pupils.
- For some pupils, the task does not interest them or they find it too difficult and they become distracted quickly. This leads to some unacceptable off-task behaviour. Behaviour management is used well and teachers and teaching assistants address this quickly to re-engage pupils in their learning.
- Teachers use questioning to monitor progress in lessons, but pupils' answers are not always used to help reshape their learning and increase their progress. This often results in pupils repeating previously learnt work.
- The most effective teaching is stimulating and sustains pupils' interests. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils, who were showing confidence in the use of fractions, were quickly identified during the initial session by the teacher and given an extended task to work on by themselves. They did this with enthusiasm and made good progress extending it

further when the rest of the group worked on their tasks.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught well and supported in their learning by teaching assistants who ensure that the children develop their skills well. Good routines are established quickly as seen in the Reception class where music was played at the end of the lesson signalling children to clear up their work.
- Pupils with additional needs are supported well both in and out of lessons by teaching assistants. Planning involves the teaching assistants who ensure that these pupils are fully engaged and making progress.
- Very few parents responded to the questionnaire so the results are inconclusive. However, in a recent questionnaire undertaken by the school it found that parents were positive about the teaching at the school.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and provide clear next step guidance to the pupils. The pupil reviews this and undertakes improvements, which are checked by the teacher the next time the book is marked. This consistent practice is supporting pupils being able to think and learn by themselves.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are happy at the school and generally have positive attitudes to learning, especially when the work reflects their interests and aspirations.
- Staff pay a great deal of attention to ensuring that pupils are well cared for and, as a result, safety and procedures to support them personally are effective. Pupils reported that they were confident the adults in school would quickly resolve any problems that they may have.
- Although there were few responses from parents during the inspection, they were all positive when asked about behaviour and safety. This is a similar picture in the recent survey the school has undertaken. Some parents noted some concerns in the school survey regarding bullying.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. Records show that this is the case and the very few issues have been dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The breakfast club provides a good start to school for those pupils who attend and encourages them to be punctual and ready to learn. However, too many pupils arrive late to school and this causes some slight disruption at the start of the day in most lessons. The school is challenging parents and encouraging them to get their children to school on time, with some success. Attendance is average.
- In lessons, pupils' behaviour is mainly good. However, on the very rare occasions when this is not the case and pupils engage in some inappropriate behaviour, such as chatting to each other or coming off task, it is because the work is usually not suited to their ability.
- Pupils play outside together well and show a good understanding of how to keep themselves, and others, safe. They demonstrate good manners and clearly know right from wrong. All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, say they feel safe and very secure.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Although the headteacher and other leaders have a clear understanding of the issues relating to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement at the school, they have not yet managed to secure consistently good teaching, which will lead to good achievement.
- Leaders, including governors, have successfully addressed most areas of concern in the previous inspection. However, raising the quality of teaching to match the best practice within the school has not been achieved, as it still remains inconsistent. Improved monitoring of teachers' performance was put into place and leaders know their teachers well, but there

is not yet a swift enough response to continual underperformance and that is delaying the improvements required.

- Leaders have secured and sustained improvements in the assessment of pupils' work, assessment tracking systems to monitor pupil performance and have resolved most of the issues raised at the previous inspection. This indicates that there is a capacity to sustain further improvements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for well through the curriculum and other activities, such as assemblies and visits. Visits to places such as Morwellham Quay to study the Victorians or Mount Edgecombe to study the artist Andy Goldsworthy helps pupils develop their reflective thought and understanding of the local environment while working together developing their social skills.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Topic based work is designed well to ensure that the core skills in literacy and numeracy are developed alongside the diverse range of experiences available through activities such as the Year 5 historical study of the local area using art and drama.
- Leaders robustly manage all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding.
- The local authority is providing ongoing support and guidance to help leaders challenge weaker teaching effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has experienced many changes in personnel since the previous inspection. As a result, all governors do not have a secure understanding of how closely related teacher performance is with the performance of the pupils nor how well their school performs compared with others. Some governors have a clear understanding of the need to support leaders in their quest to improve the quality of teaching and they are now challenging teachers to improve their performance. This ensures that the link between performance and salary progression is challenged effectively. However, they are not ensuring that this is rapid enough so the school can eradicate underperformance. They monitor how well pupils are doing at the school and evaluate the impact of developments within the improvement plan to have maximum impact on the outcomes for pupils. Funding to the school is monitored effectively, especially the pupil premium allocation. Leaders are expected to use this spending to improve the outcomes for pupils but, due to the limited capacity within the governing body, this is not always fully understood and challenged. For example, the additional staffing for these pupils in Year 6 last year helped reverse the background of underperformance by securing some good progress for these pupils.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113300
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	401358

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

<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>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Nash
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris West
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 567602
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