

Milton Mount Primary School

Grattons Drive, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 3AG

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The progress that pupils make varies between year groups and subjects and is not consistently good, particularly in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not consistently enabled pupils to make fast enough progress in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are not always challenged in their learning to enable them to reach their full potential, especially the more-able pupils.
- Marking does not always make clear to pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. The expectation that pupils will use the marking of their work to make corrections or improvements varies between classes.
- Teachers do not always ask questions that make pupils think hard enough, or require them to explain their understanding and so develop their learning further.
- The wider leadership team does not check pupils' progress carefully enough. They do not use information about pupils' progress sufficiently well to identify groups that may be falling behind.
- Not all leaders and managers observe the quality of teaching often enough, or help the headteacher and deputy headteacher sufficiently to improve the quality of teaching.

The school has the following strengths:

- The quality of teaching is improving, and some of the teaching seen during the inspection was very effective. As a result, pupils' attainment is rising.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school, and this is reflected in their above-average rate of attendance. Pupils feel safe in school.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher evaluate teaching accurately, and have been effective in eradicating inadequate teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 26 lessons, including seven joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils. They also held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders and teachers, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the 88 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 32 responses to questionnaires completed by staff. Inspectors also spoke with small numbers of parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school including the school's own information and analysis of its performance, the school improvement plan, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and of pupils' work, as well as attendance, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Inspectors analysed pupils' work in relation to progress being made, the quality of teachers' marking and the breadth of the curriculum.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector
Keith Homewood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion of these pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than average. This is additional government funding to support, in this school, pupils eligible for free school meals and a very few who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is expanding and is in the process of a large building project. There are currently three classes in each of the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, and two classes in each of Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- There have been a number of changes to the teaching and management teams in the last year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - teachers set work at the right level of difficulty to make sure that pupils, especially the more able, make at least good progress
 - all marking shows pupils how to improve their work and teachers check more regularly that pupils act on their advice
 - teachers match questions to pupils more skilfully to help them explain and think hard about their learning so that they make more rapid progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that all leaders:
 - use information about pupils' progress more effectively to identify groups that may be falling behind in their learning
 - develop their skills of observing and analysing teachers' performance in order to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is inconsistent across different year groups because not all teaching has been of high enough quality to secure good progress. Despite this, progress by the end of Year 6 is improving in the current year, though this is yet to be sustained. Pupils' positive attitudes help them to be well involved in learning, and this is helping them to speed up their rates of progress.
- In 2013, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 was broadly average. Attainment has improved steadily over the last three years, but progress has been significantly below that found nationally, and was particularly low in mathematics. However, attainment is rising, especially in writing, because there has been careful planning to improve writing skills, a robust approach to tackling weak teaching and an improving quality of teaching over the last year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils. There is effective support for these pupils through the good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants. Gaps between the attainment of these pupils and all others are also closing because of the effective checking of their progress and the provision for them.
- The most-able pupils do not always make good progress, and too few of these pupils reach above the level expected of them. Tasks set do not always enable them to develop the skills and knowledge needed to reach the higher levels.
- Children join the school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the trend is for pupils to make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. This is because there is a good balance between activities that provides a stimulating choice of indoor and outdoor activities.
- In Key Stage 1, there has been a rigorous approach to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make), which is reflected in the consistently strong and above average outcomes for pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy reading and writing, and their better skills in writing are clearly helping them to develop their skills in other subjects.
- The opportunities that pupils have to read and write in other subjects support their learning well. However, pupils are not always given the same opportunities to practise and extend their skills and understanding in mathematics in other subjects.
- Pupil premium funding is used for a range of additional support sessions for these pupils. As a result, pupils have narrowed the gap between their English and mathematics scores and those of their classmates, especially in reading. In the 2013 national tests, this group was slightly ahead in reading, and this has been the case for the last two years, but still a term behind in writing and mathematics. However, the school's current information on pupils' progress indicates that the overall trend of improving attainment for this group is continuing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is too variable across the school. Where teaching requires improvement, the tasks set for pupils are not well enough matched to their needs. Pupils are not consistently challenged. The more-able pupils are often set tasks that are not hard enough and do not help them to achieve more.
- Teachers ask pupils questions to tease out their understanding and to correct errors in their thinking. Pupils have the confidence to answer questions and to contribute to class discussions. However, not all teachers are good at asking pupils questions or at challenging their explanations so as to make all groups think hard.
- Teachers' marking is not consistently good across all subjects. It does not always show pupils clearly what they must do to improve and comments do not always link specifically to pupils' targets to help them to reach their next level. Pupils with a wide range of special educational

needs are supported well both in lessons and in a range of additional small-group activities. Teaching assistants play an important role in ensuring this work is effective.

- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is good. Teachers make good use of resources, visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm for learning and to give it relevance. For example, pupils in Year 5 visited a nearby school to sing and develop their confidence as performers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that good behaviour is typical and school records over time confirm this view. Pupils understand the expectations regarding their behaviour and there is a very calm atmosphere in the school. In the playground, pupils play and get on well together. They are supported by an appropriate number of adults and there are few instances of behaviour falling below expectations.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They value the recognition and rewards that come from behaving well. Pupils of all ages work cooperatively with each other. Courteous behaviour is typical because the pupils want to live up to the school's values of polite and respectful conduct.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive to school on time. This is because they enjoy school and the way staff listen to and look after them.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils consider bullying to be rare and, if it occurs, it is dealt with promptly by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and other online hazards. They understand how to minimise risk to themselves.
- Pupils say they feel safe and, in the survey, parents and carers unanimously agree that this is so. Pupils feel cared for by their teachers and other adults and often talk of the warmth and pleasure in being in school. Teachers manage behaviour well and pupils are very responsive to their directions. Consequently, lessons run smoothly without disruption.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because the quality of teaching and pupils' progress varies too much between year groups. Middle leaders (those in charge of subjects and year groups) have not yet had enough opportunities to observe lessons by themselves and formally record the improvements needed and make subsequent checks on improvements in teaching.
- The leaders in charge of year groups who have been in post since September are being trained well by the deputy headteacher. They are highly committed but have not yet started to fully evaluate information about pupils' progress in detail in order to plan where improvements are most urgently needed.
- The school is also using information more effectively to ensure that all teachers understand their responsibilities for pupils' progress. As a result, the targets set for the teaching staff are closely linked to the standards expected of all teachers nationally.
- The school's self-evaluation shows that the headteacher has accurately identified the areas requiring improvement, indicating the school's capacity to improve. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are addressing weaknesses by providing effective training, support and advice that are appreciated by staff.
- The checking of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is both rigorous and accurate. The high standard of teaching expected is made very clear to staff. This has led to several changes in staffing as weak teaching has been eradicated.
- The local authority has provided a 'light touch' approach to support the school, and offers effective guidance for the headteacher. The local authority also assists the school with governor training.

- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enriched by a good range of subjects and topics, a variety of visits and visitors, and fund-raising activities. The school retains a high focus on the arts and pupils enjoy music and art.
- The primary school sports funding is being spent on coaching for staff and widening pupils' participation in a range of activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied. Governors take an active role in training for safer recruitment. Leaders also promote equal opportunities well and are rigorous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- The school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to be actively engaged in school life and their children's education. In Year 1, there is a very successful initiative where parents and carers have the opportunity to work with their child at the beginning of the school day to understand some of the school's teaching strategies.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The committed governing body has organised training since the previous inspection in order to better understand and check pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in the school. Governors have a good understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards and are highly aware of the need to improve the skills of pupils in mathematics and to speed up their progress. The governing body is informed about the quality of teaching and how the targets set for teachers are used to improve staff practice, tackle underperformance and reward good teaching. Governors are regular visitors to school, are linked to school priorities and work alongside teachers. They know how the pupil premium has been used and are clear about how it has supported pupils' learning specifically. For example, the attainment in reading of pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium has been above that of other pupils at the school for the last two years.

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	125916
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	441057

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	501
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley King
Headteacher	Anne Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 February 2011
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