

Milton Park Primary School

Milton Park Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS22 8DY

Inspection dates

28–29 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Not all pupils achieve well enough by the end of Year 6, particularly in writing.
- Pupils do not make enough progress by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Not enough teaching is consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress they are capable of as they move through the school.
- The work that teachers set is not always well matched to meet the needs of the pupils. Sometimes it is too hard but often it is too easy, especially for more able pupils in English and mathematics.
- Although there have been improvements in the way that the pupils' books are marked since the last inspection, pupils do not always take the opportunity to respond and their progress slows.
- Not enough opportunities are given to pupils in problem-solving activities in mathematics. They then struggle to apply their learning to new challenges.
- Disabled pupils and those who have been identified as having special educational needs do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing or mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed headteacher is determined to ensure the school becomes the best it can be. She is ably supported by the deputy headteachers and other senior leaders.
- Since the last inspection, governance has become more effective. Governors are supportive of the school and routinely challenge the leadership to secure improvements.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. They are taking rapid action to improve teaching which is enabling pupils to make better progress.
- The gaps in the achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are closing.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. They are taught well in a supportive environment and make good progress.
- Pupils are well behaved. They enjoy learning and playing together and treat one another with respect. Pupils are kept safe and are well cared for.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly rooted in the school's strong values.
- The good links with the community of local schools have been used well to strengthen school improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made short visits to four lessons. An inspector observed an assembly.
- Inspectors scrutinised the quality of work in pupils' books, accompanied by the head and deputy headteachers.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school and listened to the views of many other pupils during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, governors, a local leader in education and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took into consideration the responses of 27 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: the school development plan; the school's view of its own performance; data relating to pupils' attainment and progress; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; performance management records of staff ; governors' minutes; information on attendance; records about behaviour and safeguarding; and school policies.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the online Parent View survey. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jennifer Cutler

Additional inspector

Geoff Mason

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Milton Park Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of them speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, is higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one of two classes on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The governing body manages a before-school and after-school club each day, which is evaluated as part of this inspection.
- The school is a member of a local trust of schools who work together on school improvement through a programme of professional development, monitoring and evaluation. The schools that form the trust are Bournville Primary School, Oldmixon Primary School, Walliscote Primary School and Windwhistle Primary School. Through this trust, the headteacher of Bournville Primary School, who is a local leader in education, provides support for this school.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection and took up post in July 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement, specifically in Key Stage 1, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use information about what pupils can and cannot do to plan challenging work that matches their individual needs
 - set more demanding work in all lessons for those pupils who are more able
 - check pupils' understanding more regularly throughout lessons so that teachers can amend and adjust their teaching to ensure that learning continues throughout for all pupils
 - provide opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments so they can correct errors and improve their skills
 - create opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving tasks.
- Improve writing skills for all pupils by ensuring teachers:
 - give pupils more opportunities to write independently and to write longer pieces of work
 - expect more from pupils when they are given writing tasks across different subjects, particularly the more able pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders demonstrate a good capacity to improve. The headteacher's relentless determination has been pivotal in rapidly addressing the quality of teaching and learning since her appointment in July 2014. When inspectors spoke to pupils they were told, 'our headteacher is amazing. She is kind, competitive and wants us to learn as well as we can.'
- The headteacher is ably supported by the two deputy headteachers and other leaders who share her vision and determination for the school to become the best that it can be.
- School self-evaluation is accurate and honest. School leaders, including governors, have improved their monitoring and evaluate school performance rigorously. They act quickly to implement improvements where the need is identified. This has resulted in the school's improvement since the last inspection. For example, the progress pupils make in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is improving as a result of better teaching.
- Checks on teachers by leaders are being used to improve teacher performance. This has led to improvements in teaching, marking, pupils' achievements and learning environments. Leaders are aware that further improvement is needed if pupils are to achieve better levels of progress.
- Those teachers responsible for year groups are developing their role under the leadership of the headteacher. They accurately analyse how well pupils are doing in order to plan effectively for improvement. They are able to evaluate accurately actions that have been taken to make sure pupils are now making at least the progress expected for their age.
- Leaders are setting aspirational targets for pupils, which are reviewed regularly by leaders and through pupil progress meetings. Pupil premium funding is used effectively, resulting in this group making better progress than they did in the past.
- The school's newly implemented curriculum provides a wide range of experiences for pupils. The teaching of English and mathematics is complemented by a well-organised approach in all other subjects. The curriculum promotes regular opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills, work together and respect one another's differences. It is enhanced by a wide range of well-attended extra activities and enrichment opportunities for all pupils.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are threaded throughout the curriculum. Learning in the classroom is enhanced by an extensive range of trips, visits and cultural experiences. Pupils talk enthusiastically about trips. A visit to the Tower of London and seeing the crown jewels was much enjoyed by pupils. They talked excitedly about this trip and were able to provide details of the learning that had taken place.
- Learning opportunities support the active promotion of fundamental British values. Pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about faiths and cultures other than their own. They embrace the opportunity to learn about the culture of some of their peers. For example, older Polish-speaking pupils read regularly to younger ones. The school's core values of responsibility, equality, democracy, solidarity, honesty, openness and equity are evident in the school. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy. They appoint their school councillors through an election process. They told inspectors how much they appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the appointment of the headteacher.
- Additional money to improve pupils' participation and ability in sport has been very well used. Specialist sports coaches teach a wide range of sports and skills during lessons and lead after-school clubs. Inspectors observed a 'Street Surfing' club which was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by those pupils attending. Pupils also have the opportunity to attend other outdoor activities such as horse riding.
- The school meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. Robust systems are in place which are monitored by the headteacher and governors to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. There is a strong emphasis on caring within the school. Staff ensure that pupils are safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe beyond the school gates.
- The school embraces its membership in the local trust of schools. This partnership challenges judgements the school has of its own performance to ensure that these are accurate and evidence-based.
- The local authority and a headteacher who works with the school in their capacity as a local leader of education is working closely with the school to bring about the necessary improvements in teaching and pupil achievement. Timely visits since July are supporting the improvements leaders are making. Weak teaching has been identified and actions swiftly put in place to tackle underperformance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the last inspection the effectiveness of the governing body has significantly improved. There is

now a full complement of governors and a newly appointed clerk. A review of governance has led to an increased understanding of the role of governors and better use of governors' skills.

- Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. They use the detailed information provided by senior leaders to ask challenging questions about the improvements being made to teaching and pupils' achievement. This level of challenge is not formally captured in minutes of meetings as well as it should be.
- Governors are working more closely with school leaders on self-evaluation and improvement planning. Through regular visits to classes, pupil conferencing and meeting with leaders, governors have a good awareness of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. They have a strong understanding of how school leaders hold teachers to account for their work and challenge any underperformance.
- Governors closely monitor the finances of the school to ensure financial stability so that resources coming into the school are managed effectively and provide good value. For example, they have a good knowledge of how the pupil premium is spent so that it improves the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors ensure that the school meets all of its statutory duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct around the school and in lessons is good. They have positive attitudes towards school, show respect and take good care of each other. The school's core values are strongly promoted and embedded. Pupils clearly understand the importance of these values when making choices about their behaviour and conduct. One pupil said, 'We are well behaved because we have clear rules so everybody knows what to do.'
- The majority of parents, staff and pupils talk positively about the behaviour in the school. Of the very few parents who completed the inspection questionnaire, there were a very small minority who raised behaviour and bullying as a concern. Inspectors viewed a wide range of evidence to show that reported incidences are rare.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Teachers encourage the pupils and make sure the atmosphere in lessons is supportive and friendly. They manage pupils who have moments of challenging behaviour extremely well. The occasions when pupils interrupt learning are becoming less frequent and pupils told inspectors that when there is occasional inappropriate behaviour it is quickly dealt with so their learning is not hindered.
- Pupils told inspectors about the 'worry box'. Pupils write down their worries and put them in the box which provides opportunities for them to share their worries with learning mentors. They welcome this and feel that their concerns are sorted quickly so they can enjoy their time in school.
- Pupils with specific behavioural needs are extremely well supported by adults and this ensures that they conform to the school's expectations of behaviour. The 'soft room' is a place in school where pupils can go to calm themselves before returning to their learning. Pupils who make use of this facility told inspectors they appreciate its availability. Behaviour logs show a decline in the number of reported incidents of poor behaviour.
- The improving attendance and punctuality of pupils reflect their enjoyment of school. One pupil commented that 'everyone is so very nice and you are made to feel welcome'. Any absences are quickly followed up and as a result attendance has improved rapidly and is now close to the national average.
- Pupils are fully aware of the different forms of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and are confident that staff deal quickly with any incidences that occur.
- The school works effectively with other agencies to ensure that support is provided for pupils and families who are vulnerable. This level of pastoral support is appreciated by those who access the provision. It has strengthened the relationships between home and school, resulting in better communication and improved attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The policies and procedures for safeguarding are embedded in all aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They receive good guidance through lessons and

assemblies in developing skills that will keep them safe and able to manage risk when in and out of the school. For example, pupils are very clear about the use of the internet and how to use it safely.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- There is not enough consistently good or better teaching to make sure all pupils make at least good progress regardless of their background, ability or starting point.
- Since her arrival, the headteacher has taken rapid action to address weaknesses in teaching. Recent appointments are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Inspection evidence, including joint observations with senior leaders, discussions with pupils, staff and governors and an analysis of the school's monitoring records, confirms this improving picture.
- Work is not always pitched at the right level for pupils. At times, pupils find the work too easy or too hard. Progress slows and a few pupils' attitudes to learning are then not as good as they should be as they become frustrated.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding during lessons so that they can amend and adjust their teaching to ensure that learning continues throughout for all pupils.
- The quality of writing has improved since the last inspection but it is still not good enough. Also, the presentation and care seen in pupils' books are too variable across the school and between different subjects. Leaders are taking swift action to tackle this by providing additional training for teachers, reviewing planning and routinely monitoring and evaluating the quality of work in books.
- The teaching of mathematics is too variable. Pupils are not always given the opportunity to apply their mathematical skills to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts in problem-solving activities. They then cannot apply their learning to new challenges.
- Teachers are increasingly asking more probing questions to get pupils to think more deeply and extend their learning. They provide opportunities for pupils to share their ideas with a 'talk partner'. This is particularly helpful in enabling pupils to clarify their thoughts before writing. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were planning a setting for a fantasy story. The chance to talk through their ideas gave pupils the skills and confidence to sit and write their story setting.
- Teachers' marking has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils fully understand the 'tinkled pink' and 'green for growth' marking system that is used consistently across the school. Teachers regularly set additional tasks for pupils so that their thinking can be extended. However, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking before the next lesson. As a result, there are missed opportunities for them to address errors and improve their skills.
- Typically, teaching assistants provide good support. They are most effective when they work with teachers to provide well-planned small-group activities, and when helping pupils learn through targeted questioning and by breaking down learning into smaller steps. However, this support is not yet having the necessary impact on the achievement in national tests for those pupils identified as having special educational needs.
- Robust tracking and monitoring shows that as a consequence of improved teaching and high-quality interventions, a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils identified as having special needs are making strong gains in their learning.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children arriving in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly settle into school life because of the high-quality care and support provided by staff. They make strong progress in speaking and listening, reading, writing, number and technology. They get off to a good start and by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The number of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check continues to improve and remains above national figures. This knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle unknown words is helping pupils to learn to read quickly. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are able to read with fluency and understanding and achieve the expected standards in the national tests.
- For several years, pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 has been below national averages. By the end of Year 2, achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is well below where it should be given their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. This is because not all pupils benefit from consistently good teaching. As a result, too much catching up has had to take place as they move into later year groups.
- In the 2014 Key Stage 2 national tests, attainment was below that of pupils nationally in reading and

writing, but above in the spelling and grammar test and in mathematics. The proportion of pupils making expected progress was larger than nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making good progress was larger than nationally in reading and mathematics but not in writing.

- The progress of the most able pupils is too variable. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics is lower than the national average. This is because work set does not always challenge pupils sufficiently to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- The gap for disadvantaged pupils compared with others in the school is closing. It is smaller than that found nationally for similar pupils in all subjects except mathematics. In the 2014 national tests, Year 6 pupils achieved better results than similar pupils nationally in mathematics, spelling and grammar. Their achievement was similar to their peers nationally in reading but lower in writing. Pupils remain about six months behind all pupils nationally in mathematics and reading, and twelve months behind in writing.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. These pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics when compared to their starting points. While the support for these pupils to help them catch up is improving, it is too early to see its impact on pupil achievement.
- Current Year 6 pupils are on track to make the nationally expected levels. The school has set aspirational targets indicating that a higher proportion of pupils will make better-than-expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- The Early Years Foundation stage is well led. Teachers make early checks on what children can and cannot do when they first start school. This identifies strengths and weaknesses which teachers use to plan activities which are well matched to the individual needs of the children. Teachers observe learning closely to assess the needs of the children and to plan for new opportunities across all areas of learning.
- Children in both classes enjoy positive relationships with staff. This allows them to settle quickly into school life, grow in confidence and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Parents told inspectors that they feel their children are settled at school, teachers are easy to approach and they feel involved in their children's learning.
- Children behave well and respond positively to instructions. Whether playing indoors or outdoors leaders have clear systems in place to ensure children are kept safe.
- Children make good progress from their starting points because of teaching which is typically good. This prepares them well to move into Year 1.
- Learning journals show detailed progress against all areas of learning. Parents have opportunities to view journals and contribute to them, which enables good communication between home and school.
- Adults typically provide good support for disadvantaged children and those identified with special educational needs so that most are working at the expected level for their age in all areas of learning. Vulnerable children are provided with high-quality support. This helps them to be secure in their learning and make at least expected progress.
- Leaders have accurately identified the need to improve the outdoor provision. They have developed high-quality plans to ensure that all children make the best progress across all areas of learning, but this work is still at an early stage.

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	135189
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	453572

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joy Donovan
Headteacher	Lorraine Fitzpatrick
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 February 2013
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