

# Millpond Primary School

Baptist Street, Baptist Mills, Bristol BS5 0YR

## Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Inadequate</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Inadequate</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders' capacity to improve the school is too limited and overly dependent on external support.
- Pupils' outcomes are inadequate. Leaders have not halted the decline in pupils' achievement. Consequently, too few pupils meet expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders' systems to check pupils' progress are not fit for purpose. This limits their ability accurately to evaluate the school's performance and pupils' achievement.
- Teaching is inadequate and does not meet pupils' needs. Teachers' expectations are low; they do not provide work that is matched to pupils' needs and national curriculum requirements.
- As a result of inaccurate assessment, teaching does not build consistently on what pupils already know. Sometimes work is too easy or teachers move pupils on before they are secure in their understanding. This slows progress.
- Teaching does not challenge the middle-attaining and most-able pupils adequately.
- Teachers do not take sufficient responsibility for the learning and progress of groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, their learning falters.
- Governors have been poorly informed about the school's performance. This has limited their ability to hold leaders to account for raising pupils' achievement.
- Pupils do not take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning. Persistent low-level disruption in lessons is prevalent and hinders learning.
- Attendance is too low. Despite the school's considerable efforts, pupils' absence is not reducing quickly enough.
- Rates of exclusion are consistently too high.

### The school has the following strengths

- In just a few weeks, the interim headteacher has brought about positive change, but it is too early to see any impact on achievement.
- Teaching in Reception builds on what children know already and therefore meets their needs.
- Governors have sought external support to bolster leadership capacity.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - securing leadership capacity in the school so that leadership is not reliant on external support
  - equipping leaders to take effective action to eliminate inadequate teaching
  - establishing clear systems to check on the progress of groups of pupils so that whole-school effectiveness can be measured accurately
  - ensuring that governors receive accurate and detailed information that enables them to hold the school to account
  - ensuring that governors know the impact teaching has on pupils' progress, and check more rigorously on the performance of specific groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - insisting that teachers' assessment is accurate and that they use it to plan work to meet the needs of pupils
  - insisting that expectations of teaching staff are consistently high and the requirements of the national curriculum are fully met.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment urgently by ensuring that teachers:
  - take sufficient responsibility for the learning and progress of groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that their progress is consistently good
  - have consistently high expectations of what all groups of pupils can achieve
  - set work that challenges pupils and deepens their understanding so that middle-attaining pupils and the most able make good progress.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
  - ensuring that rates of attendance improve for all groups of pupils
  - rapidly improving the attendance of pupils who are persistently absent
  - teaching pupils to take responsibility for their learning and how they behave, so that persistent low-level disruption in lessons is eradicated and exclusion rates fall.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leadership has been ineffective. Weaknesses at this school are widespread. Low expectations of teaching and pupils' outcomes are too readily accepted. The school is failing to provide an adequate education for its pupils.
- Leaders, including governors, have not acted quickly enough to tackle the decline in the school's performance since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress in mathematics has been weak over a number of years. In 2016, only one fifth of pupils at the end of Year 6 achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms that this picture is unchanged. Too few pupils are on track; they are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- There is no substantive headteacher. The interim headteacher, who has been in place for the last seven weeks, is working determinedly to address the significant weaknesses at the school. However, it is too early to see any impact on raising pupils' achievement.
- There is no up-to-date strategy for school improvement in place. Governors have set short-term targets for improvement but these have not been translated into an improvement plan that is fully understood by staff. This makes it difficult for governors to hold the interim headteacher to account for meeting improvement targets.
- Those in other senior leadership roles do not work strategically to improve pupils' outcomes. They do not routinely track the progress of groups of pupils, for example disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and the most able. Therefore the school's assessment system is not fit for purpose because leaders cannot accurately evaluate the performance of the school.
- Middle leaders are new to their role and have not been provided with the training they need to carry out their responsibilities effectively. As a result, they have limited impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils have equality in the education they receive. Stark differences in the impact of teaching across the school prevail. This is because the quality of teaching varies considerably from year to year and across classes.
- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching adequately or effectively. Too little emphasis is placed on checking pupils' progress over time. As a result, staff do not get an accurate view of the impact of their teaching on raising outcomes for specific groups of pupils. Pupils' underachievement is not tackled quickly enough.
- Leaders do not ensure that teachers routinely tackle persistent low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils' off-task behaviour is the norm in many classes. This has an adverse effect on pupils' learning. Recent improvements to the way leaders are managing challenging behaviour is helping to reduce incidents of poor behaviour. However, closer checking and reporting is required to bring about more rapid improvement.
- The leadership and management of funding and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not fully effective. Leaders have not acted quickly enough to respond to pupils' learning needs. Pupils receive day-to-day support

but its impact is variable. Planned interventions for pupils falling behind are tracked by the special educational needs leader. However, not all pupils get access to learning that is matched to their needs. This hinders the progress these pupils make.

- Leaders do not check the impact of the wider curriculum and extra-curricular activities with sufficient rigour. Inspectors found that while a variety of subjects are taught, there is insufficient exposure to tasks that deepen pupils' understanding or require pupils to apply their English and mathematics skills across the curriculum. This hinders pupils' learning and understanding. Pupils find it difficult to talk about the breadth of curriculum on offer or the aspects of their learning they enjoy.
- The sports premium funding is used to encourage pupils to become more physically fit and healthy through specific whole-school projects. Specialist coaches teach a range of sports to pupils.
- Leaders have not been effective in their use of the pupil premium. Until recently, leaders have not evaluated the impact of how this additional funding has been spent. Current records on the school's website do not meet requirements as set out by the Department for Education. Disadvantaged pupils make variable progress across the school.
- Teachers are positive about the training and support they receive. This is developing their subject knowledge and skills, for example their understanding of progression in mathematical skills. However, this is not having a sufficient impact on improving pupils' outcomes across the school.
- Current evaluation of school effectiveness by the local authority accurately identifies considerable weaknesses in the school's performance. The local authority has planned a comprehensive programme of support for the school's leaders. The interim headteacher is acting quickly to respond to widespread weaknesses. Further support from a specialist leader of education is brokered to assist in developing teaching and learning. Regular meetings take place with the school leaders, the local authority and governors, but it is too early to see any improvement in pupils' outcomes.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have not been successful in halting the decline in whole-school performance.
- They have not ensured that all statutory policies are updated on time.
- In the absence of an up-to-date improvement plan, governors do not have the information they need from school leaders to hold the school to account for raising pupils' achievement. However, governors are working in close partnership with the local authority and interim headteacher to address the inherent underachievement at the school.
- Governors are using the information they do have to challenge low expectations. For example, governors actively raise questions through meetings and school visits about why pupils' outcomes remain low. They challenge the impact of leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching and also interrogate attendance information, including persistent absence. However, until recently, they did not receive accurate answers.

- Governors have taken decisive action to bolster leadership capacity, such as by commissioning leadership support from a national leader of education (NLE) in the autumn term and successfully recruiting the current interim headteacher.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Those responsible for leading safeguarding work closely with external agencies to minimise children’s risk from harm. School documentation confirms that concerns are followed up quickly and records are kept meticulously. Leaders who have specific responsibility for safeguarding make timely referrals, make good use of significant and extensive external agency support, and follow up to ensure that everything is being done to minimise pupils’ risk of harm.
- Clear systems are in place to reduce safeguarding risks when parents apply for extended absence. For example, parents are required to provide detailed reasons and information for holidays, and sign to confirm that they understand that female genital mutilation is illegal. The school has a close working relationship with the police and other external agencies in this regard. Systems in place are robust.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the safeguarding policy was updated in May 2016 following the local authority safeguarding audit. Recent training for all staff is up to date and follows the most recent national guidance as set out in September 2016. However, the policy published on the school’s website at the time of inspection had not been updated in line with national requirements.
- Any pupils taken off the school’s admission register are referred quickly to the local authority and the correct procedures are followed.
- Leaders check regularly and in detail that pupils using alternative provision attend well, are safe and make good progress.
- Staff have completed training appropriately. However, some aspects of training need to become further embedded across the full staff team. For example, records show that all staff have completed recent safeguarding training, but a small number of staff were less proficient in explaining how to make referrals and follow up concerns.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that adults actively listen and respond to any concerns they have.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. It is poorly planned and fails to meet the needs of pupils well enough. Current teaching is not eliminating the legacy of pupils’ underachievement. As such, pupils have considerable gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills. This hinders the progress they make towards expected standards.
- Leaders of teaching, learning and assessment have not made the necessary improvements in teaching. Assessment is inaccurate in some classes. This limits teachers’ ability to plan work that is matched to pupils’ needs. As a result, some work is either too easy, and the same tasks are repeated over time, or work is too hard so pupils cannot access tasks and this slows the progress they make.
- Teaching for the most able pupils is not challenging enough. Pupils have too few

opportunities to deepen their understanding and apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

- Teachers' expectations are too low. This limits pupils' exposure to age-appropriate learning. Pupils' work is left unfinished in some years, particularly by low-attaining pupils. Teachers do not plan work that deepens pupils' understanding.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is too variable. This is because teachers are not fully accountable for the progress these pupils make. They do not ensure that work on offer meets their needs well enough. As a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- The impact of additional adults is too variable. In some cases, teachers do not deploy adults effectively and so their impact is limited. In other cases, adults' support does not foster pupils' independence. This hinders pupils' academic progress. Conversely, support through specific intervention is bringing about some improvements to pupils' reading ability.
- Teaching does not consistently motivate or interest pupils. As a result, pupils can find it difficult to sustain their concentration or they only complete the minimum expectation of tasks set. When pupils finish tasks early, additional activities are not routinely provided. Teaching staff do not check pupils' understanding and, as a result, pupils' learning stalls. This has an adverse effect on pupils' progress over time.
- Until recently, the teaching of phonics has not been matched against national curriculum requirements. This has resulted in a decline in pupils' outcomes and slowed pupils' progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is inadequate.
- Pupils have little confidence in the school's ability to manage the lack of self-discipline in lessons. They told inspectors that low-level disruption is regular and that it gets in the way of their learning.
- The school's work does not develop pupils' drive as successful learners. This is because the school curriculum is not supporting pupils well enough to show determination in their learning and make good progress in their work. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- When work does not capture their imagination, pupils get easily bored or fail to sustain concentration. This is not routinely picked up by teachers and has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from positive care and emotional support, but they are not well prepared for the next phase of their education because their academic progress is too limited.
- Breakfast club provides a safe and positive start to the day for pupils, their siblings and parents. Families sign in electronically each day to keep everyone safe. Pupils like coming and benefit from a healthy breakfast and a variety of games to play.

- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. When they have concerns, they know who to go to and adults follow up any concerns quickly. Pupils talk positively about 'the nest', which provides nurture provision within the school. Pupils say that bullying is rare.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Pupils' lack of engagement and persistent low-level disruption have an adverse effect on learning. Some pupils are disrespectful and talk over teachers when they are addressing the class. This limits the learning of others. As a result, pupils are not on track to meet expected standards.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently too low. Rates of attendance vary considerably from one year group to another. In Year 6, attendance is above the national average. This higher rate of attendance masks poor attendance in other year groups, for example in Year 4. Too many pupils take extended unauthorised holidays during term time or are absent for extended periods.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high. Reasons for persistent absence are tracked carefully and external agencies used routinely to minimise risk.
- Appropriate external agency support is used extensively to support families to improve attendance. As a result, attendance is gradually improving this year. The parent support adviser and inclusion leader are having a positive impact on minimising pupils' lateness to school.
- Since the previous inspection, exclusions have been consistently higher than the national average. The school works closely with the local authority and external agencies to secure safe and appropriate education for those pupils with challenging behaviour and social, emotional and mental health needs who find it difficult to maintain positive behaviour within the school. However, despite considerable multi-agency support, rates of exclusion of a small number of pupils are not reducing quickly enough.
- For those pupils who are educated off-site and attend alternative provision centres, records of their attendance, academic progress and well-being are detailed and kept up to date. Leaders maintain a strong effort to reintegrate these pupils back into mainstream education.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- Pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable because leaders' and teachers' expectations are too low.
- Too often, pupils make insufficient progress as a result of weak teaching. The legacy of underachievement is not being successfully addressed. Where stronger teaching is evident, it is not making up for the weak teaching that pupils have encountered elsewhere in the school.
- Some assessment information collected is inaccurate; it does not reflect the quality of work in pupils' books and is overgenerous. The interim headteacher is taking swift action to rectify this, but it is too early to see any impact.



- Progress for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and the most able is too variable across the school because their access to appropriate learning differs too much from class to class.
- At key stage 2, pupils' achievement has declined considerably. Pupils' achievement is considerably lower than that achieved nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. For the last three years, published outcomes show that progress in writing and mathematics has been considerably below average. For those pupils with middle prior attainment in 2016, their achievement was in the bottom 10% nationally in writing and mathematics.
- In key stage 1, too few pupils reached expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Too few pupils build effectively on their knowledge and skills from early years to the end of key stage 1. Now in Year 3, these pupils are not catching up quickly enough.
- Phonics outcomes have declined over the last three years. Leaders' low expectations of what should be taught have limited pupils' exposure to appropriate work. As a result, until recently, too few pupils had access to the Year 1 curriculum and consequently failed to meet the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check. For pupils currently in Year 1, teaching remains too inconsistent and consequently too few pupils are on track to meet the expected standard this year.
- Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development, the standards expected at the end of early years, has increased steadily. Inspection evidence confirms that teaching is well matched to children's needs so that children make strong progress from their low starting points during their time in Reception. However, outcomes remain below the national average.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- The strategic leadership of early years requires improvement. There are too many inconsistencies in the quality of provision for it to be good. Leaders do not check the impact of teaching and planned interventions to accelerate children's learning regularly enough. As a result, leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of children's progress in early years. The school's self-evaluation of early years is overgenerous.
- Leaders do not check the impact of pupil premium funding regularly enough. Therefore, senior leaders cannot report accurately on its impact.
- In Nursery, teaching does not consistently take into account what children can already do in order to move them on in their learning. For example, where children are developing their understanding of single words and phrases, but do not use the correct vocabulary for an object, adults do not correct or model the right word. This means that children continue to use inaccuracies in language and this limits their language development.
- A range of activities are on offer for children to enjoy indoors and outside. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Children settle quickly because there are clear routines and adults form strong relationships.
- Staff in Nursery accurately record what children can and cannot do and track their progress. Regular assessments capture children at work. However, adults do not check

children's understanding or develop their learning regularly enough and so, for some children, their learning falters.

- In Reception, teaching meets children's needs well. Any prior gaps in experience are tackled effectively so that children are catching up towards the standards that are expected for their age. Children show high levels of independence, interest and enthusiasm for their learning. For example, children cooperated maturely when using pairs of 'describing binoculars' to focus on a dinosaur landscape scene. This encouraged them to construct ideas and speak in full sentences.
- In Reception, teaching places a high priority on language development and personal, social and emotional development. As such, the provision on offer builds consistently on children's prior understanding. Weaknesses in children's speech and language development and writing are accurately identified and being tackled robustly. Teaching helps children to write sentences accurately and develop their letter formation well. As a result, children are getting the quality teaching and support they need.
- Although some children make rapid progress across the early years, too few enter Year 1 with the knowledge and skills expected for their age.

## School details

Unique reference number	109137
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	10024994

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Therese Gillespie
Interim Headteacher	Margaret Gwynne
Telephone number	01173 773085
Website	<a href="http://www.millpond-primary-school.com">www.millpond-primary-school.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:school@millpondprimary.org">school@millpondprimary.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2013

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average-sized primary school. Numbers on roll are falling. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of classes in the school.
- The substantive headteacher left in December 2016. There is an interim headteacher who has been in post for seven weeks.
- There have been seven new members of the governing body since 2015.
- The school has undergone considerable staff changes recently and since the previous inspection.
- A significant majority of pupils do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club managed by the school.
- Nursery children attend part time. Children in Reception attend full time.
- A very small number of pupils with emotional or behavioural needs attend off-site provision with Education 1<sup>st</sup> Learning Centre or Cabot Learning Federation.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about school performance and pupil premium on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school. Some learning was observed jointly with the interim headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books to establish the quality of their current work and their progress over time. They listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents to ascertain the school's evaluation of its performance.
- Records relating to behaviour and safety, attendance and safeguarding were also reviewed. Inspectors also reviewed the school's performance information.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, school business manager, middle leaders and a small group of teachers. A meeting took place with a representative of the local authority. Further telephone conversations took place with other local authority officers. An inspector also met with governors.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during their learning and at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with some pupils to seek their views of the school and discuss how they feel about their learning and development.
- An inspector visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors sought information about pupils educated off-site, in alternative provision centres.
- Inspector considered eight responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also considered comments provided by parents' text messages and spoke to parents during the inspection. An inspector met with a group of staff to seek their views of the school.

## Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Cowley	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Breeze	Ofsted Inspector

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