

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW MILTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

NEW MILTON

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115929

Headteacher: Mr John Crisp

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
23708

Dates of inspection: 4th and 5th March 2003

Inspection number: 247599

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Old Milton Road New Milton Hants
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan O'Sullivan
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

New Milton Junior School serves a wide spectrum of families of very largely British heritage most of whom come from the streets surrounding the school in Old and New Milton not far from the coast. Take up of free school meals has nearly doubled to above average over the past three years as the nature of the catchment changes. The school is popular in the area and class sizes were large but a managed reduction in numbers will see the school stabilise in the mid 400s. Movement of pupils in or out of school is usually less than in most schools but one year group has seen an above average turnover recently. Numbers of pupils needing extra help are increasing with more than a fifth of pupils on the special needs register and four having statements of special need. Most pupils join the school from the neighbouring infant school and attainment on entry as indicated by recent national tests is below that found in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with no significant weaknesses, which has improved steadily over the years. Academic achievement, pupils' personal standards, teaching and overall leadership and management are very good, Current expenditure per pupil is more than most schools but attainment on entry is below average. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good teaching ensures that pupils make well above average progress in literacy and numeracy in each year group and eleven-year-olds regularly attain high standards
- High quality provision in the other subjects ensures that pupils experience a very rich range of learning opportunities and do well in them
- It makes very good arrangements to promote pupil's personal development. They work hard, enjoy learning, behave very well, take responsibility and get on very well together
- Every avenue is explored to support teachers in their work and pupils in their learning, whatever their ability or interest
- Procedures for matching the school's provision and pupils' achievements to best practice and looking to constantly improve them are exemplary
- With the head, ably supported by the deputy, in the lead, every member of the school staff and governing body plays an important role in the management and development of the school. The leadership and management provided by the head and deputy are excellent.

What could be improved

- While relationships and communications within the school are very good, an unintended consequence of a series of changes in the way the school operates have made it difficult for many parents to build the sort of positive relationship and easy communication with the school they would wish to have.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

After the last inspection in October 1997, the school's above average results improved year on year in line with the national trend. However, in 2002, with national standards levelling out, the school's results continued to improve taking mathematics and science to well above average and English results nearly so. Current standards and pupil achievement match these very good outcomes. All the issues noted in the last report have been dealt with successfully with special needs, art and design technology strong features of the school and very well established classroom monitoring procedures ensuring that learning objectives are clear and explicit. In addition, teaching is now consistently good with much very good greatly helped by the increased number and effectiveness of well-trained teaching assistants. Other fundamental improvements - many through the school's innovation - help to make improvement since the last inspection very good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	B	A
mathematics	C	C	A	A
science	A	B	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Results have been better than average and significantly so in English and science for the past few years especially when compared with schools in a similar situation. In 2002 the school achieved its best ever results with all three core subjects well above average when compared with like schools. Even more impressive was the very good improvement made by individual pupils when tracked from their scores obtained as seven-year-olds. This is especially the case with pupils achieving lower grades in Year 2 and the number converting middle range results to the higher grade in Year 6. Inspectors agree with the local authority that pupils made 'very much more progress' than in other schools. Achievement in literacy, numeracy and science continues to be very good throughout the school with standards continuing to build year on year. The present Year 3 joined the school with the lowest overall attainment for several years but are already catching up well. Results in Year 6 national tests should be at the same very good levels again this year. Pupils identified as needing extra help are doing well and standards in lessons and recorded work observed in a range of other subjects are at least appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned and often better.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are very positive about school and join in wholeheartedly with all it has to offer in and out of class. They are very keen to talk about their work, proud of their achievements and their school and work hard to complete tasks set. Attitudes to school and learning are very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good behaviour all round the school makes a very significant contribution to the standards achieved and its happy, ordered feel. Excellent behaviour is not unusual. Adults rarely have to intervene but when they do, pupils react quickly and positively.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: everybody gets on well with everybody else and the children make visitors feel very welcome. Good manners and respect for property are a feature of the school. Pupils are growing into very confident, sociable and sensible citizens who recognise their own worth and appreciate the contribution made by others. Boys and girls work together very well, use their initiative sensibly and take responsibility very conscientiously when it is offered.
Attendance	For the great majority of pupils, school is a positive experience. Lateness and absence are unusual and well dealt with by the school.

Pupils make a very good contribution to their own education through their very positive attitudes to work and very good behaviour. They are confident and enthusiastic about learning and are always ready to share their skills, knowledge and opinions with others

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Almost all teaching is good with a substantial number of very good lessons and some excellent. Very good teaching was observed in each of the four year groups and in many subjects including numeracy and literacy. Current arrangements where pupils are taught together in sets or bands of similar prior attainment in literacy, numeracy and science are a big factor in the consistently good teaching of basic skills. This, combined with the very good support of well-trained, experienced teaching assistants also helps pupils who find learning difficult to do well. Lessons are very well planned to provide pupils of all abilities with challenging and interesting activities with a very good balance of academic, creative and practical activities. Expectations for behaviour, pace of working and presentation are high and pupils make a very good contribution to their own learning by their willingness to contribute, enthusiasm for learning and ability to work hard in a group or individually.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils are given a very good range of learning experiences covering all the required elements well supplemented by a variety of extra activities with literacy and numeracy suitably emphasised. The imaginative use of cross-curricular themes is a feature in most subjects. Very good planning procedures making good use of national and local schemes ensures progression and that pupils in parallel classes have a similar diet. The imaginative use of various groupings based on previous learning means teachers are able to focus their planning on a narrower range than usual. Very good attention is given to promoting pupils' understanding of themselves and matters of health and safety.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures for identifying need, setting targets and monitoring progress are very effective and pupils' progress is good. The special needs coordinator makes very good provision for pupils who find learning difficult with very good support from classroom assistants. Other pupils are well supported in class by their teachers who provide work at the appropriate levels.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make very good provision for promoting pupils' personal development with very good arrangements for the development of social skills and attitudes and moral awareness. Curricular and other provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage, learn about and value cultural diversity and reflect on their feelings and life is also very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. All areas of their health and welfare are taken very seriously and governors and staff are constantly checking to ensure that all is well. Physical arrangements and procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are well known by the whole school community. Good attendance has a high priority. Assessment procedures are very well established, especially in the core subjects and very good use is being made of information provided by this and national tests to track pupils' progress and guide planning.

The great majority of parents are very pleased with the way the school is helping their children to learn and mature. They feel comfortable in their formal and informal dealings with school and make a good contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very well and, as a team, they provide the school with excellent leadership & management. A key element of this has been the way they have helped and encouraged all staff to develop their leadership roles and subject and aspect leaders form a significant force for good in the development of the school. Very clearly expressed aims and values drive the school's work and these are reflected in its very efficient & unobtrusive management & positive, caring ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and keen for the school to succeed. They have developed good arrangements for fulfilling their responsibilities, know the school well and are aware of its strengths and concerns. The head has ensured that they are fully involved in identifying what needs to be done to improve and as a group and individually they are providing the school with necessary practical and moral support
The school's evaluation of its performance	Arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning are very well developed. Staff and governors are routinely involved in the process and this results in a lot of informed discussion about the direction of the school. Information from tests and assessments is very carefully analysed to sort out trends and focus planning, especially in literacy and numeracy. Teaching and learning are observed regularly in the classrooms and staff are given regular opportunities to discuss their performance. The very useful school strategic plan based on this process appropriately identifies specific areas for improvement, each of which is directly related to standards. The school's commitment to improvement and the impact of actions already taken are excellent.
The strategic use of resources	The head and governors ensure that the school makes very good use of all its resources through the detailed evaluation of the impact of all it does. All spending is targeted on agreed priorities and is carefully managed and monitored. A good supply of well maintained and used teaching resources have been accumulated in all subjects. Good numbers of teaching and support staff are very well deployed and the school has made very good use of the potential of its site and accommodation.

The headteacher and deputy head, have over many years, provided the vision, direction and determination to build a school of which the whole school community can be rightly proud. Very well supported by the governors and staff, their contribution to the current success of the school cannot be overestimated.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children enjoy going to school • teaching is good and their children are making good progress • pupils work hard and do their best • the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good • the staff are very approachable • the school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the work children are expected to do at home • information about how well their children are doing • the partnership with parents • the range of extra activities

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents but feel that the range of extra activities offered by the school and the homework provided are better than in most schools. Improvements could be made to the information the school provides about pupils' progress and the school's partnership with parents is not as strong as everyone would wish.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Very good teaching ensures that pupils make well above average progress in literacy and numeracy

1. Almost all pupils who join New Milton Junior School as seven-year-olds do so from the neighbouring infant school with levels of attainment usually below the national average. National test results for the current year three were below average in reading and writing and well below in mathematics. Despite this, test results for school leavers have been consistently above average and sometimes well above since the last inspection. When compared with similar schools, results in English and mathematics were well above average in 2002. Local authority figures show that on average, these pupils improved twice as much as the average across the county in both subjects. Good examples of the progress made were the six pupils who went from low grades in English as seven year olds to high grades as eleven year olds and the fact that twice as many pupils achieved higher grades in mathematics in Year 6 as they did in Year 2.

2. Lesson observations, work analysis and discussions with pupils show that the trend of well above average progress and steady gains in attainment against national expectations through the school year on year are being maintained. Several factors account for this including the creative and flexible use of various ability groupings, the impact of special needs provision and the contribution made by teaching assistants in this area discussed in paragraphs eleven and twelve below, and the use made of very good assessment and monitoring procedures noted in paragraphs thirteen to sixteen. However, the key factor has been the high quality of teaching pupils have received over the years, very good examples of which were observed during the inspection. Features of these and all literacy and numeracy lessons were the very good match of work to pupils' needs with work set at various levels within the 'sets' or 'bands', the clarity of objectives and the efforts made to make work relevant and interesting. It is very impressive that pupils can be working in as many as twelve different levels per year group in numeracy.

3. In a very good Year 6 top set literacy lesson, the teacher used pupils' work and an extract from 'I Dare You' very effectively to make teaching points to extend their knowledge of complex sentences and the use of settings. With each pupil aware of what was expected of them, guided readers read fluently with expression while writers responded with 'mist rising from the water heated by the sun's rays'. Less confident mathematicians in Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed working in a smaller group to build up their knowledge of the 3x table using what they already knew and filling in the gaps. The very appropriate use of a 3, 6, 9 etc number line gave all pupils the opportunity to succeed and the teacher's use of focused questions kept them all engaged. By using the pupils themselves as objects in a virtual human Carroll diagram, the teacher soon had them able to sort themselves into blonde/not blonde and carry this across into sorting the 3x table by two attributes - odd/not odd and 1 digit/not 1 digit. In a very challenging Year 4 top group lesson, very confident pupils not only used a wide range of strategies to 'do' complex multiplication sums but were able to explain them and apply them fluently in a range of circumstances using the tables they had learned. Many of these pupils are already working at the level expected of eleven-year-olds.

Pupils experience a rich range of learning opportunities and do well in them

4. This is best illustrated by examples noted during the inspection. These included in Year 3:
- Pupils studying weather in geography listening to tapes of weather and using their own experiences to identify types of weather and creating suitable symbols for a weather map
 - Leading on from this, in an excellent music lesson, pupils representing the 'sounds' of weather, such as 'ssssh', 'pitter-patter' and 'rumble', first using their voices, then choosing an instrument to 'play' the sounds and finally representing this graphically with symbols
 - Continuing the water theme, pupils exploring what happens when liquids are mixed with liquids using water, milk, food dye, cooking oil, honey and, with the teacher's help, hot wax.

- Pupils knowledge and understanding about electrical circuits gained in science being used successfully in a design technology challenge to produce a 'ring along the bendy wire' game
 - In Year 4 science, pupils using a range of materials such as plastic bottles, balloons, straws and jelly, create a presentation to show the various reasons why we need a skeleton
 - They demonstrate a range of techniques involving structures, axles and wheels when finishing off their wheeled vehicles in design technology
 - Boys and girls are intrigued by a range of interesting 'Tudor' artefacts connected with exploration and learn how to use inference when considering historical evidence
 - In geography, pupils visit the cliffs at Barton-on-Sea as part of their local area topic
 - Year 5 pupils extend this idea when studying the Romans looking at evidence about invasion and deciding if it is relevant or accurate. In another class, they use information technology (ICT) to gather evidence as to actually why Claudius invaded Britain
 - Using this as a stimulus, pupils use the structure of a contemporary composition, 'Loopy Weather', to develop and set down their own 'Loopy Romans' compositions using phrases related to the Roman invasion such as 'Hup, 2, 3, 4' and 'Advance to the rear.'
 - In art, boys and girls design pots to hold the differing powers of the various Roman gods such Mars and Jupiter one of which has a padlock because it is so special
 - Literacy skills are well used in a religious education lesson where pupils write a diary extract about the Holy Week from the point of view of a disciple, an onlooker or a Roman soldier. They also visit a Hindu Temple in Southampton when studying other faiths.
 - Pupils in Year 6 show very good ICT skills when using hyperlinks, animation and use a search engine to gather information as part of setting up a 'Powerpoint' presentation on 'Ancient Greece'.
 - They demonstrate very good performance levels in physical education when working with partners or a group on sequences of movements involving taking each other's weight.
 - Both boys and girls are interested and engaged in learning the skills of needlework such as running, back and cross stitches in preparation for making their own pieces in art
 - Early in the year, they visit the New Forest to work on a whole range of cross curricular themes involving geography, art and literacy
5. In addition, staff, older pupils and visiting specialists provide a good range of extra activities for pupils of all ages and interests which range from chess and maths to tag rugby, and from the choir and orchestra to French and Judo.

It makes very good arrangements to promote pupil's personal development. They work hard, enjoy learning, behave very well, take responsibility and get on very well together

6. The school's brochure says that 'A child's personal and social development ... is vital to his or her own self-esteem, confidence and identity', that they should respect and 'actively care' and that they should feel secure and valued. Inspectors are able to say that the school lives up to its ideals very well and that its pupils respond by being very well-behaved, articulate, confident and enthusiastic learners. School and class rules are clearly known very well by pupils and consistently applied by all staff so that hardly any time is wasted in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Break and lunchtimes are calm, sociable occasions and behaviour in lessons is nearly always very good. A big help at lunchtimes are the various arrangements made to keep everyone happy and busy, many through the initiative of pupils themselves. The 'buddy' system managed by a teaching assistant/lunchtime supervisor provides support for any unhappy youngsters, the many clubs run by older pupils for younger ones takes the pressure off the playground and plenty of large and small equipment outside gives other pupils something constructive to do.

7. A well structured and planned personal, health and social education (PSHE) programme makes a very strong contribution in this area with regular time devoted to issues such as self-esteem, drugs, citizenship and the environment. During the week Year 5 considering 'positive behaviour' felt sufficiently confident to admit to negative thoughts and begin to recognise that behaviour is not just about right or wrong but also about positive such as patience and negative such

as jealousy. Other aspects of the life of the school support these sessions. For instance, each class collects used paper and has an Energy Captain who turns off the lights and makes sure nothing is wasted. The Senators are the elected council which provides a voice for pupils in decisions which affect pupils directly. Boys and girls are encouraged to get actively involved in helping others less fortunate than themselves, raising more than £1700 for the NSPCC. Pupils 'skipped' the equivalent of the distance to Rumania to raise money for an orphanage and one Year 6 class is raising funds for 'FragileX', a charity that is helping the sister of a member of the class.

8. Many aspects of the provision the school makes for pupil's cultural and spiritual development are listed in paragraph four above but in addition, pupils are given many more opportunities to learn about and value their own and other cultures and reflect on their feelings and life. Assemblies provide a very good vehicle for this purpose. During the inspection a Year 3 class led an assembly based on the Biblical symbols of salt (keeping things pure) and light (for guidance and visibility). In another, the head drew an intake of breath from watching pupils when he shone a light on a 'special' rock to show that its not what it looks like that matters, but what's inside. In both, pupils' interest and involvement were very impressive and moments of reflection were well used to give time to think. In an earlier assembly, Year 6 six pupils exploring heroes connected to their Ancient Greeks topic, included Zimbabwean cricketers who wore black armbands in protest against the violation of human rights in the country. Other assemblies have included a range of guests talking about aspects of faith, fair trade, the environment and charity.

9. Aspects of their own and other cultures are taught across the curriculum. For instance, Year 6 compare features of African and Australian art and while sewing, look at samples of Peruvian and Asian fabrics. Year 5 pupils studying Hinduism were visited by a Bengali parent who staged a playlet, shared food and showed them a wedding dress. Work with the local horticultural society culminated in an entry of tomatoes to the local Flower Show and pupils donated change and pocket money for 'Seeds for Africa'. A display in the library area promoted 'World Book Day' the day after the inspection, displaying a range of books from other cultures for pupils to choose. Many more community activities include harvest festivals and carol concerts at the local church and a Remembrance Day service on the playground. Pupils enter the local Music Festival, sing at local old peoples homes and concerts, enter the Winter Carnival and have taken part in the New Milton 'In Your Neighborhood' project with the town council.

Every avenue is explored to support teachers in their work and pupils in their learning

10. Many examples of the way the school supports teaching and learning have already been noted. These range from the flexible use of a wide range of groupings in literacy, numeracy and science mainly by prior attainment so that teachers can focus on a smaller range and even more precisely match work to pupils needs, to behaviour management strategies. The focus on enhancing self-esteem in PSHE is complemented by practical approaches such as the innovation of 'letter boxes' for unhappy pupils to communicate their concerns confidentially. In addition, all the efforts to make work stimulating, relevant and cohesive which are evident in paragraphs four to nine make a very good contribution to encouraging pupils to enjoy and be enthusiastic about their learning. This is very effectively backed up by very good planning and monitoring procedures and by the professional support provided for colleagues by subject and other coordinators.

11. Special needs provision was identified as a key issue at the last inspection and the new coordinator (SENCO) has been extremely effective in sorting out the whole area so that the process of identifying and supporting pupils who need extra help is very good. All the necessary paperwork is in place and all staff are now fully aware of their responsibilities in this area. With this in mind the SENCO meets with various groupings on a regular basis to ensure that the whole school community is working towards a common end. One such group with whom she meets weekly is the teaching assistants (TAs) who are the main 'front-line' workers in this area and who provide a very good service both to the pupils for whom they are responsible and the teachers with whom they work. This they achieve by making it possible for less able pupils to do what their classmates are doing by, for instance, writing down pupils thoughts in a history lesson or using a tape recorder for the same purpose in a literacy lesson.

12. Many other good examples of the very constructive relationship between teachers and TAs were observed. These included high quality, unobtrusive support for individual pupils in a numeracy lesson, the TA modeling writing while the teacher makes a milkshake in literacy and the TA helping a much less articulate group explain their work on 'explanation' texts to the rest of the group. A strong feature of the school is the way TAs are undertaking focused professional development and are now taking the lead in several areas. One was observed running a Year 3 social skills group set up in response to the needs of a particular group. Two have timetabled slots for providing individual pupils with pastoral guidance and support, another is responsible for the hands on management of the school's 'Buddy' system while another has received training in supporting able pupils and is working in this capacity in Years 3 and 6. The librarian performs a very important role in the school by promoting books and reading throughout the school day and making it possible for teachers and pupils to access and make use of the very good library facilities whenever they need them. By storytelling, organising book weeks and days, teaching library skills and ensuring that pupils have appropriate reading materials, she provides excellent support for staff and pupils.

Procedures for matching the school's provision and outcomes to best practice and looking to constantly improve them are exemplary

13. This is another area best demonstrated by exemplars from across the range of the school's activities. Some are mentioned in or are implicit from what has already been noted. For instance:

- The school's ability to provide work at levels very well matched to pupils' needs comes from very good assessment and monitoring procedures which are well used to measure progress and set targets
- The high quality of this information makes it possible for staff to develop a range of organisations to match the needs of different year groups in literacy, numeracy and science and for special needs resources to be closely targeted
- It also ensures that senior managers and governors are able to base decisions and set priorities based on clear evidence and evaluations
- All curriculum leaders have time to manage, agreed targets, action plans and budgets to build quality right across the curriculum
- Many of the arrangements set up to support pupils' social and emotional development have been in response to the specific identified needs of individuals and groups.

14. Backing all this up are a comprehensive, well developed and well understood set of procedures and expectations which mean that both staff and governors are kept very well informed and are encouraged to engage in detailed discussions about where the school is and what needs to happen next. The key player in this is the deputy head who, with a good deal of expertise and insight, manages the area of monitoring, evaluation and action planning very well. The excellent level of data analysis she is able to undertake and communicate to staff and governors means that detailed trends and priorities are quickly established and acted upon.

15. A feature of the management of the school is the high priority given to the professional development of all staff and the use made of performance management as a tool to both encourage staff to constantly improve and to set measurable targets for the impact of this on pupils' achievements. In this area and many others, very good use is made of external assessors notably the local authority as a means of keeping up standards.

16. The governing body also has a very hands-on approach to fulfilling their monitoring role. Very regular, detailed feedback from responsible staff for various areas of the school's work and the impact of initiatives is regularly supplemented by classroom visits, chats with teachers, discussions with pupils and involvement in school in-service. In non-curricular areas such as finance, personnel and premises, the quality of the information provided for governors is of the same high quality and governors' awareness and capacity to make informed judgements and suggestions are very good.

With the head in the lead, every member of the school staff and governing body plays an important role in the management and development of the school.

17. Milton Junior School has benefited greatly from the strong partnership forged between the head and deputy head over many years which has, despite a steady turnover of staff, seen the quality of education provided by the school grow year on year to its present very healthy state. Very effective cyclical systems and procedures have been developed which have made it possible for the decision making, planning and action processes to be shared and owned by all members of the school staff. As noted above, monitoring, evaluation and the setting of aspirational targets are very well established within the school and everyone knows their role in the process. The information produced is the raw material from which priorities and the need for improvement are established and various groups and individuals are responsible for the process of change and review. These include subject and year group leaders with structures to ensure that teachers within year group teams share responsibility for subjects and aspects such as special needs. While very good use has been made of national initiatives such as performance management building on the school's own good practice, initiatives such as the 'Forward-Looking Action Group' which involves all teachers and support staff who are interested, show the inclusive and creative nature of the management of the school.

18. Central to this is the way in which everyone who works in the school is part of a team committed to all that is best for its children. Relationships and communication are very good and it is obvious that everyone's contribution is valued. The head delegates real responsibility, not just tasks, and teachers are encouraged to develop their various management roles which they have done to good effect by leading improvements in their areas of responsibility. As noted above, governors are kept very well informed and are regularly involved in 'hands-on' monitoring of the areas for which they are responsible. They have very well developed procedures for managing their workload, and provide very good support and a critical friend for the head and staff. Despite the very good results achieved in testing, the school is still looking for further gains and nobody is sitting on their laurels. The sustained very good outcomes and provision, and continuing improvement and innovation noted above are very good evidence for the excellent leadership provided by the head and deputy head over the years.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Changes in the way it operates have made it difficult for many parents to build the sort of positive relationship and easy communications with the school they would wish to have

19. The inspection team are very impressed by the efforts the school makes to develop and maintain very good relationships and communications within the school. As noted frequently above, everyone has a voice and mechanisms are put in place to ensure that messages are heard, accepted and acted on. Time, effort and resources are put into developing practical support, arrangements and opportunities so that all staff and pupils can take some responsibility for or share in the life of the school. Self-esteem and self-confidence are seen as key aims; every effort is made to ensure that everyone is included in all the school has to offer. However, for a variety of reasons, many to do with changes in the way the school operates, all for good reason and well-intentioned, the same cannot be said about its partnership with parents.

20. The great majority of parents are more than happy with the progress their children are making and with the efforts staff make to help them mature and grow. However, a significant number of interested parents want to be more involved but are put off by a combination of small barriers. Many more are prevented from fully appreciating the true quality of the school as indicated in all the things the school 'does well' noted above. For instance, the reception area is not very welcoming without any celebration of pupils' work or useful information on display and, with the glass shutters usually closed, it is intimidating for a nervous parent. Another example is the fact that, while formal procedures to deal with larger concerns are well documented, current arrangements make it difficult for parents to allay fears or share information by a quick, unplanned informal conversation. Without this, they worry unnecessarily, build up misconceptions and useful information is lost to the school. In addition, the cumulative message in some documentation for parents is unnecessarily defensive, unintentionally implying a lack of trust.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

21. To make it possible for all parents to become fully involved members of the school community and so appreciate and enjoy the high quality of all that is provided for their children by New Milton Junior School, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Audit all existing arrangements and communications to see whether or not they are promoting or inhibiting the growth of a partnership between the school and its parent body
- Consider ways to redevelop the reception area to make it much more parent/visitor friendly
- Investigate ways of making it possible for parents to have quick informal 'chats' with their child's teacher to deal with minor concerns
- Develop existing proposals to make use of questionnaires and focus groups to find out parental opinions on those areas which concern or interest them and act on this information
- Confirm the inclusion of 'Partnership with Parents' on the School Improvement Plan and devolve the responsibility for developing this area to a designated group within the management structure

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	24	2			
Percentage	3	29	63	5			

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	3 – 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		448
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	3 – 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		59

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	61	57	118

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	49	49	59
	Girls	46	49	53
	Total	95	98	112
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (89)	83 (74)	95 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	48	51	61
	Girls	47	50	55
	Total	95	101	116
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (75)	86 (83)	98 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
425	1	
3		
2		
5		
2		
2		
3		
2		
3		

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.23
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	255

Financial information

Financial year	2002
£	
Total income	911799
Total expenditure	949407
Expenditure per pupil	2143
Balance brought forward from previous year	52133
Balance carried forward to next year	14525

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9
Total number of vacant teaching posts (Full Time Equivalent - FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.72
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	448
Number of questionnaires returned	175

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	55	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	38	7	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	54	6	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	15	3	2
The teaching is good.	51	44	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	46	18	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	40	4	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	47	16	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	50	39	4	3	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	49	5	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside	34	41	16	2	8

lessons.

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