



Milton C of E VC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110792
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288776
Inspection date 26 September 2006
Reporting inspector John Godwood

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Humphries Way
School category	Voluntary controlled		Milton, Milton
Age range of pupils	4-11		Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 6DL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01223508783
Number on roll (school)	395	Fax number	01223508783
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr David Lee
		Headteacher	Miss Sue Dorrington
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Its social context is relatively advantaged and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, although very few have a statement of special educational need. The school's leadership team is relatively new, the headteacher having been in post for just over a year and one of the two deputies for just over a term.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils are happy and achieve well as a result of good teaching and good care. The school has a very good ethos, based firmly on its Christian values. These permeate the school and have positive effect on pupils' personal development. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision about the school's future and the school is developing strongly as a result. The pursuit of high standards is clearly seen in the way the school is improving the areas of its work. Good staff teamwork means that everyone is working together to the same high aspirations. The vast majority of parents are very happy with the school, finding staff approachable, committed and supportive. When pupils join the school, their knowledge and skills are above average. Standards and provision in the Foundation Stage are good. Pupils continue to make good progress, so that by the time they leave in Year 6, standards are exceptionally high. However, Year 6 results declined a little last year and Year 2 assessments have declined by a small amount over the last two years, particularly in mathematics. This is partly because more children had learning difficulties. The school has identified writing as a weaker area and, through tracking pupils' progress and providing additional support where needed, has begun to make improvements. Pupils do not have the same quality of guidance in mathematics. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual and moral development is promoted well, supported by good links with the church. Behaviour and attendance are good. Pupils contribute well to the community and have growing opportunities to be responsible and enterprising. There have been recent improvements to behaviour management and the quality of social and health education. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan carefully to match work to the range of ability. They build good relationships with pupils, who respond well and enjoy most lessons. Pupils' progress in writing benefits because they have targets for what they should achieve. Not all pupils, however, are clear what their targets are. Marking is good but does not give enough feedback on pupils' progress towards their targets. The curriculum includes a good range of subjects and additional activities. Pupils learn French from Year 3. Increasingly, teachers are making lessons more meaningful by linking subjects. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in many subjects. There is a good range of enrichment activities such as 'history off the page' and the French cafe, as well as clubs and trips. Additional support for pupils with learning difficulties is good; the opportunities for gifted and talented pupils are satisfactory and improving. Leadership and management are good. The recently formed leadership team has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and has initiated an ambitious improvement plan. The support provided by governors is outstanding. Parents also contribute well through the fundraising activities of the school association. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained high standards and made good progress on the issues raised. A lot has been achieved over the last year, although some developments are too recent to have yet had a major impact on standards. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are clear about their writing targets and how well they are doing in relation to them. - Improve the guidance that pupils receive for their progress in mathematics to match that in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and attain exceptionally high standards. In the Foundation Stage, they make good progress and reach levels above those expected for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress through the school. The results of the assessments made by teachers at the end of Year 2 are above average. However, they have declined a little over the last two years and are lower in mathematics than in reading and writing. National test results in Year 6 are exceptionally high, although they declined a little in 2006, particularly in English, partly because more pupils had learning difficulties. The school met its targets, except for the number of pupils reaching Level 5 in English. A strong focus on writing over the past year has begun to improve pupils' progress in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The school has a strong Christian ethos that supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. As a result, pupils make good progress in these areas. The local vicar makes a valuable contribution to assemblies and religious education. Pupils are happy and enjoy school. Recent developments have strengthened pupils' personal development in several ways. The school council is respected and effective. Pupils also contribute to the community as 'play pals' and through collecting for charity. They learn to be enterprising through managing a school council budget. Social education has been given a higher profile in the curriculum and the school is working towards the healthy schools award. Pupils are taught well how to stay safe and keep healthy. Behaviour is good. There are a very small number of pupils who disturb lessons or are unpleasant to others, but behaviour has improved through a more consistent policy and support for social skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage pupils well and plan a range of interesting activities for pupils of different abilities. Consequently, pupils concentrate well and are keen to take part. They discuss their ideas sensibly in pairs and express

themselves clearly when answering questions. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties so that they make good progress and reach their targets. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to add pace and impact to their presentations. Pupils have good opportunities to use laptops and the whiteboards. The school has gained two prestigious awards in 2006 for its use of ICT to support learning; the Naacemak and the ICT Mark. In writing, pupils have targets that help to focus their learning. However, not all pupils are clear what their targets are. Marking is done well and includes constructive feedback, but this is not linked clearly enough to pupils' targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is planned carefully to provide a broad, balanced and rich programme of activities. Literacy and numeracy are given appropriate emphasis, with recent improvements in learning literacy through its use in other subjects. The use of ICT is planned well into the learning of many subjects. Good links with the local secondary school are used to provide French for older children and a wide programme of sport. History is enriched well through visits and events. Music and drama are also strong. There is a good range of clubs, visits and residential trips. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is well planned and effective. The level of challenge for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory and is a current priority for development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils feel safe and trust their teachers. There are rigorous procedures for child protection and ensuring safety in school. The school has good links with outside agencies and a strong partnership with parents. Parents are very appreciative of the good communication with teachers and the headteacher and of the high level of care for individual pupils. Several commented positively about improvements over the past year. Induction into the Foundation Stage is carefully planned and pupils are well prepared for the transfer to secondary school. The tracking of pupils' progress and the provision of additional support for those who need it is satisfactory and improving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a clear direction for the school, based strongly on its Christian values. Her vision is shared by the senior leadership team and staff. Teamwork is good. As a result, the school has a strong ethos that underpins pupils' good achievement and personal development. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development. It seeks and values the views of pupils, parents and the community. It is part way through an ambitious improvement programme and has achieved a lot, including improvements to the

curriculum, pupils' personal development and the standard of writing. Subject coordinators are increasingly effective in checking the quality of work in their subjects, tracking pupils' progress and providing additional support. Much of this work is new and has not yet had a full impact on raising standards. Pupils' attainment is analysed carefully and used in planning improvements. However, this analysis has not identified the need to support mathematics with the same level of focus as writing. Governance is outstanding. Governors have a very clear understanding of their role and make a significant contribution to the school's strategic direction. They are supportive and challenging. They contribute very well to financial management and improvements to the facilities.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 September 2006 Dear Children Milton CE Primary School, Humphries Way, Milton, Cambridge, CB4 6DL I enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for sharing your thoughts with me. You told me that you enjoy school because it is a happy place and most of the lessons are fun. The teachers and other staff take good care of you. Most of you behave very well. You told me that behaviour has improved since you have had the new code of conduct. Many of you help each other and the school. The play pals are helpful in organising activities for other children. The school council does a good job in collecting pupils' views and helping to make changes. You all help people in need through filling shoeboxes and collecting stamps for guide dogs. I saw some good lessons while I was there. The teachers make them interesting with the interactive whiteboards and good activities. I was pleased to see how well you discuss things with each other. You learn a lot and do well in your tests. Your writing is improving because teachers check your progress carefully and give you extra help if you need it. I have asked the school to give you the same sort of help in maths. I have also asked the teachers to make sure that you know what your targets are and how well you are doing in reaching them. Miss Dorrington and the other teachers run the school well. They work very hard to make sure you are happy and keep improving the school. Yours is a good school. Please keep up the good work. Yours sincerely John Godwood (Lead inspector)