



# Miers Court Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 118545  
**Local Authority** Medway  
**Inspection number** 291163  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Jacquie Buttriss

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Silverspot Close
<b>School category</b>	Community		Rainham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Gillingham ME8 8JR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 388943
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	377	<b>Fax number</b>	01634 388486
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Tom Winnett
		<b>Headteacher</b>	S Patterson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 September 2001		

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<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 6–7 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291163
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Miers Court Primary School is larger than average. There is a privately funded nursery on the same site. A shared breakfast club and after-school club serves the community on this site. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Miers Court Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. Under the headteacher's clear-sighted leadership, excellent care, guidance and support are having an outstanding impact on the personal development and well-being of all pupils. Exemplary behaviour is a great strength of the school. Attendance is good, pupils have positive attitudes and there are very good relationships. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy and they clearly enjoy school. Indeed, there is an evident enthusiasm which spreads into all areas of learning, as one Year 6 pupil put it, 'My teacher turns lessons into fun.'

Children begin the Reception Year with levels of skills below those expected. They make good progress and achieve standards in line with national expectations at the end of the year. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress and continue to reach standards broadly in line with national averages. In Years 3 to 6 all pupils are encouraged to work very hard to achieve their full potential and by the end of Year 6 standards are very high. Pupils' progress is outstanding in these year groups, which represents good overall achievement from when they began at the school. The very good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to achieve well by the time they are ready to move on to secondary school.

Teaching is predominantly good, with some examples of outstanding teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6. Teachers employ a range of strategies to make lessons stimulating and to motivate pupils to do their best. However, in Years 1 and 2 some lessons lack pace and some teachers do not expect enough of their pupils, with the result that they do not progress as well as they could. The good curriculum across the school is varied and is very well enriched by a wide range of additional learning opportunities. The provision for Reception children is good and helps them make a good start to their education.

There is very good academic guidance and support for pupils of all abilities, with very detailed assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress. This helps to ensure that all pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The school has made good use of monitoring and evaluation processes to identify strengths and to target areas for improvement. Recent initiatives to raise standards in Years 3 to 6 have led to a continuing upward trend in achievement by Year 6, which demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve. The great majority of parents are strongly supportive of the school and how well it does for their children. 'We have been very impressed by all aspects of the school,' is a typical comment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in Years 1 and 2 by increasing the pace of lessons and raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the school is below that expected for this age group. During the first year at school, pupils make good progress and their standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the Reception Year. This represents good achievement.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. This represents satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are significantly above national averages in English, mathematics and science which represents outstanding achievement in Years 3 to 6. A high proportion of pupils achieve the upper level in their Year 6 tests. Pupils with learning difficulties make excellent progress in Years 3 to 6 and achieve very well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance is above average and there have been no exclusions in the past year. Children tell us how much fun they have. For example, during the inspection they and the staff dressed up in a variety of impressive costumes for Book Week. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding. There is no evidence of any bullying and all pupils have helped build an anti-bullying wall. Children tell us that they feel very safe and secure. They enjoy developing healthy lifestyles and one pupil told us, 'We prefer the healthy school meals.' Pupils make a positive contribution to the community through a range of events. They take their school council very seriously and feel that they are listened to and can affect changes. Opportunities to run stalls and handle money at the school fair contribute well to pupils' future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

In Years 3 to 6, teachers exploit children's enthusiasm to keep them working hard, and make lessons enjoyable, with lively, well paced and varied activities. This is a strong factor in some of the excellent lessons seen and the outstanding progress these pupils make. One Year 6 pupil commented, 'Lessons are hard but funny and teachers make it easy to learn.' Teachers have good subject knowledge. Most teachers communicate high expectations and set challenging work, which helps children raise their performance. In Years 1 and 2, the pace of lessons is sometimes slower and some

teachers have insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can do. In the Reception Year, children benefit from good and well planned teaching.

A particular strength throughout the school is the good relationships that are developed between adults and pupils. Teachers' good marking of pupils' work and the very effective individual targets they set for pupils help them know how well they are doing and how to improve even further.

Pupils with learning difficulties benefit greatly from the very high quality of support they receive, based on regular analysis of their individual needs and progress. This helps them to achieve remarkably well by the time they are ready to move on to secondary school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The balanced and varied curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and is particularly strong in promoting literacy and computer skills in Years 3 to 6, prompting one Year 6 pupil to proclaim 'Literacy is fun!' Links between subjects and events such as Book Week help to motivate pupils. During the inspection, for instance, a teacher dressed as Cinderella's wicked stepmother led her children in learning their tables 'with attitude'.

Children in Reception classes enjoy a good and well planned curriculum, characterised by a very wide range of learning activities. However, in Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is sometimes insufficiently challenging to raise standards in the basic skills.

All pupils are helped to understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and they benefit from well planned work to learn about personal health and safety matters. A wide range of additional activities and opportunities, events, visits and visitors greatly enrich pupils' experience. For example, one class took part in a competition to design the car of the future, and won the opportunity to visit Ford's Dagenham factory.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that pupils work and play confidently in a safe environment. Regular risk assessments are carried out and there are good child protection procedures. The outstanding ethos of this school strongly promotes pupils' care and consideration towards each other and their eagerness to do their best. They benefit from high quality support and supervision and respond remarkably well to all staff's high expectations of conduct. 'Buddy' and 'friendship stop' systems enable trained volunteers to help and support vulnerable children, enhancing friendships and mutual care.

The school rigorously monitors and tracks individual pupils' performance, using this information to help children fulfil their potential. As a result, most pupils know their targets and are helped to aim high and do their best. Very good links with outside agencies and professionals ensure strong support for the personal and academic development of pupils with learning and other difficulties.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The strong leadership team is a feature of this school. The headteacher has a clear vision which is shared with all staff and which sets an excellent direction for school improvement. This leads to a high quality of care and education. As a central part of the school's extensive self-evaluation process, careful analysis of pupils' performance and progress leads to very good target-setting. The impressive and continuing rise in standards by the end of Year 6 is evidence of a strong drive for school improvement, leading to positive outcomes. This demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement. For example, the school has correctly identified that writing is a priority for development in Years 1 and 2 and has implemented a range of strategies designed to raise standards. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, although staff have discussed and targeted the general issue of achievement in Years 1 and 2, this is not documented as a priority in the school improvement plan.

The dedicated and enthusiastic governors provide good support for the school. They conscientiously fulfil their roles and responsibilities in helping the school to continue to move forward. The school listens well to the views of parents and pupils and takes care to respond positively in order to improve the school's provision.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	2
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**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed talking with you. Yours is a good school that helps you to make good progress and helps you to achieve well.

These are the things we especially like about Miers Court Primary School.

- You are friendly, polite and helpful and your behaviour is excellent – well done.
- The headteacher, teachers and staff all work hard to give you excellent care and support to make sure you do well and enjoy your learning.
- You understand the need to stay safe and healthy.
- You tell us that the teachers make lessons interesting and fun and they help you to improve your work.
- You work very hard and achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you are ready to leave this school.

This is what we think your school could do even better:

- In Years 1 and 2, some of your lessons could have better pace and some teachers could expect more of you in your learning to help you work harder and do better.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.