

# More Park Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118774
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	291251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Patricia Potheary

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 category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	189
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Watson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Maria D'Agostini
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2001
<b>School address</b>	Lucks Hill West Malling ME19 6HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 843047
<b>Fax number</b>	01732 847706

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

More Park is an average sized primary school with pupils from a broad mix of social backgrounds. Almost all pupils are of White British origin with very few from other ethnic groups. A small minority have a variety of learning difficulties. Most teachers have been appointed in the last two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

More Park is an effective school where pupils thrive and develop good academic and personal skills. The school has a strong Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of its work and leads to a caring, considerate community spirit. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Children arrive at the school with the skills and knowledge generally expected of children of their age. By the time they leave the school standards are above average. They do well in almost all subjects, but there is scope to improve the skills of more able pupils in writing in Years 1 and 2. Good overall achievement results from strong leadership and management with a successful focus on raising standards and improving pupils' life chances. Good quality self-evaluation means that senior leaders know the strengths and shortcomings of the school very well and they act effectively to continuously improve provision. Most parents are happy with the way their children achieve, typically commenting, 'We are very pleased with the progress our child is making.'

Teaching is usually good, which is why pupils make such good strides in their learning. Children get off to a good start in Reception and have a good base of skills at the start of Year 1. Throughout the school, good care, guidance and support ensure that expectations of what pupils can do are high. There is strong guidance to make sure that pupils reach their goals which are quite challenging. In a minority of lessons pupils make sound rather than good progress, largely because the work does not match their needs closely enough.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and take full advantage of the good curriculum and the wide range of the activities provided for them. Both boys and girls do particularly well in football, winning several trophies. Good links with other organisations such as schools and the local music service lead to a wealth of opportunities, which bring learning alive for pupils.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being result in them taking a lot of responsibility, for example they organise playground games and have contributed well to the planned redevelopment of the school site. Pupils also show an increasing awareness of how to keep safe and be healthy, and school meals are well designed to encourage healthy eating.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons match the needs of pupils closely so that each makes consistently good progress.
- Improve pupils' writing skills for the more able in Years 1 and 2.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

When children start school their skills and understanding are broadly average. They achieve well and make good progress in Reception, particularly in their personal, social and emotional learning. This is successfully built on and good achievement continues until they leave school. They do particularly well in Years 5 and 6; Standards are therefore above average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The rate of progress has been improving well since an improved monitoring and tracking system was put into place and challenging targets set. This resulted in particularly good achievement for Year 6 in 2006. There have been fluctuations in progress from year to year due to weaknesses within teaching. These have been largely eradicated but in some classes,

progress is still satisfactory rather than good. This most noticeably affects writing for the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2. Despite clear improvements in writing throughout the school there is still scope for further improvement for this group.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are usually very polite and show mature consideration and respect for others. They have a good appreciation of the needs of people less fortunate than themselves and of being part of a wider worshipping community. They behave well and have a keen sense of right and wrong, which is supported by an effective system of rewards and sanctions and the strong spiritual dimension to the work of the school. They recently won first prize from the 'Anti-bullying Alliance' competition. Pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of our society is less well developed, because the opportunities they have to explore other cultures are too limited.

Most pupils eat healthily and take part in the very good opportunities for regular physical activity. They willingly take responsibility and are pleased to be able to represent others on the school council and act as general school and class monitors. Pupils contribute well to the local community through links with the Church, charity fund raising and concerts. Their good numeracy, literacy, ICT and personal skills provide a good basis for their future. It is clear that pupils enjoy school as demonstrated in their above average attendance.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The majority of teachers make very good use of the challenging targets set for individual pupils so that lessons help them build well on what they have learned before. Teachers are confident in the subjects they teach and lessons usually have a lively pace and good, well targeted questions to help pupils to want to do well. Pupils typically say that 'teachers are really good and help you understand'. Teachers use well understood systems to encourage and reward good behaviour which allows pupils to concentrate on their work. Teaching assistants contribute significantly to the good learning taking place. They know the pupils well and are skilled in helping them understand what they have to do. A minority of lessons are satisfactory rather than good. In these lessons work is pitched at a similar level for all pupils. This results in lack of challenge for the more able, and other pupils struggling to keep up. In these lessons pupils sometimes become restless and the usual high standard of behaviour slips as a result.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is rich and has an appropriate emphasis on securing good basic skills, although the programme for developing writing to a high standard is not yet fully effective for the younger, more able pupils. The curriculum for the Reception Year provides particularly good outdoor learning opportunities. Throughout the school, personal and social education is fostered well in many different and imaginative ways, resulting in confident pupils who work well in teams. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in understanding how to learn and the school has been awarded Quality Mark status for 'study support' activities. There are particular strengths in the way that older pupils are encouraged to develop enterprise skills

and in the good provision for French. All of these opportunities ensure that pupils are prepared well for their future careers. There is an extensive programme of exercise and team games to support pupils' growing awareness of health issues. Learning is made interesting and fun through plenty of visits and through focused events such as science and literacy weeks. Pupils also have good opportunities to further develop their musical and performance skills through clubs and specialised instrumental tuition. Strong links with the local church and parish add considerably to pupils' understanding of community issues.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a very strong caring ethos which is valued by both parents and pupils. This supports pupils' personal development well, as is evident in the way they care for others. Procedures for child protection and for checks on staffing are fully in place, although there are elements of risk assessment that are not sufficiently rigorous. There are very good procedures for setting challenging targets and checking how well pupils are doing. These are beginning to be used effectively in most classes to set work at different levels for pupils, although there is still some inconsistency in the way this is done. Timely support is provided to those falling behind and pupils, including those with learning difficulties, usually progress well as a result.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has steered the school through some significant improvements, creating an effective focus on raising standards and improving pupils' progress. This work is now well supported by a new leadership team and the capacity to improve is good. Good self-evaluation means that the school knows its strengths and weaknesses very well. This has led to good improvements in provision and progress, especially in the way pupils' skills are extended in Years 5 and 6. Governors are effective in holding the school to account and play a strong role in supporting the changes taking place.

Staffing has been unstable until recently and this led to a dip in performance for Year 2 pupils in 2006 and a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching overall. Strong leadership, good links with other schools and well targeted staff development mean that the school has improved teaching and learning. The impact is already showing in good progress made by pupils in most subjects throughout the school.

The vast majority of parents are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of the good work of the school. A very small minority is highly critical of several aspects. The school takes parents' views very seriously and is responding to these concerns appropriately.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	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

<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>	2

<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.



## Annex A

**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	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	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**

4 May 2007

Dear Children,

More Park RC Primary School, West Malling, ME19 6HN

Thank you for being so welcoming to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

We found your school to be successful, well run and very caring. It is a good school, just like you told us. It helps all of you to make good progress in your lessons, and in your social and personal skills. Your headteacher and senior staff do a good job in seeing that you all do well and that the school keeps improving. We would like them to help you improve your writing even more, particularly in Years 1 and 2. You are very responsible, hard-working and well behaved. Your teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at helping you to do your best and they teach you well. We found some lessons to be better than others and have asked your school to see that all of them are as good as the best. The way you work together and care for one another is impressive and you clearly enjoy coming to school. We think that this, alongside your good skills in English mathematics and ICT by the time you reach Year 6, will stand you in very good stead for your next school and future lives.

We were pleased to see that you take plenty of exercise and eat a healthy diet. Your teachers see to it that you have a good range of subjects and activities to help you learn well and prepare for your next school. The school is good at looking after you and at helping you to become mature well-rounded people. It also guides you well to do your best.

We are pleased with the way you contribute to the school, especially the mature way that you take on responsibilities and help whenever you can. We wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours sincerely, Lead inspector