



# Montpelier Community Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 134803  
**Local Authority** Plymouth  
**Inspection number** 294174  
**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Clifton

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Beaconfield Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Beacon Park
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Plymouth PL2 3LJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 216167
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	677	<b>Fax number</b>	01752 209001
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Light
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11–12 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 294174
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a much-larger-than-average school and pupils attend from a wide area of the city. It was opened in September 2005 from an amalgamation of the junior and infant schools on the same site. Standards on entry to the school are in line with expectations. The headteacher has been at the school for just over three months. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The school has responded well to the challenge of amalgamating two schools. Despite an initially slow start in developing common policies and approaches, staff and governors are now working together effectively and current development is rapid.

Since the recent arrival of the headteacher several important improvements have been made. The school's procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses are satisfactory. Monitoring is improving teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6, where there were weaknesses. Within a relatively short time, the headteacher, supported by other senior leaders, has drawn together the staff as a whole, and instilled a school-wide commitment to change and improvement. The plan for improvement is sharply focused on raising achievement. The school is currently working to raise the profile of subject and year leaders in evaluating provision because it is too limited. Leadership and management, together with the school's capacity to improve, are satisfactory.

Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are strong features of the school. They are polite, courteous and work well together in lessons. Their personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. Pupils feel safe and move around sensibly in the sometimes crowded corridors. They like school and their attendance is satisfactory. Parents support the work of the school and many commented on the friendly atmosphere. Several also commented on improvements that have taken place since September. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Support for pupils' personal needs is good. The school has very recently introduced a new system to measure the progress made by the pupils but it is not yet effective. This is because information about the attainment of individual pupils has not been drawn together and there are gaps in the information. This is hindering the school's ability to track progress and intervene rapidly if pupils are not making the expected progress.

Pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Overall, standards are average. Standards in Year 2 are improving and are now above average. In Year 6, pupils reached broadly average standards in the most recent national tests. However, pupils' progress across Years 3 to 6 is uneven and there are too few pupils reaching the higher levels. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching and overall provision are good in Reception and this ensures that children make an effective start. Teaching is also good in Years 1 and 2 but in Years 3 to 6, lesson planning does not always take into account the different abilities of pupils sufficiently well, particularly those of the more able. This weakness in teaching is accounting for the uneven progress made by pupils in these year groups. The curriculum is satisfactory, and after-school clubs are much enjoyed by pupils.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in Years 3 to 6 through more consistent teaching and the better use of assessment.

- Improve the leadership and management of subject and year leaders and involve them more in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- Improve the system for tracking pupils' progress so that achievement can be regularly monitored and action taken quickly to support pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory. The majority of children have the expected levels of skills when they start school. Progress from Reception to Year 2 is good. In the 2005 tests at the end of Year 2, results were slightly above average. They were broadly average in English but above average in mathematics. In 2006, results improved, and are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. Results in 2006 tests declined but remained broadly average, particularly in English and mathematics. Science results fell quite sharply because of weaknesses in curriculum planning. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. The children agree and say most lessons are 'fun' and that they 'get to learn some really good stuff'. Relationships in the school are positive and pupils enjoy participating in the range of opportunities offered. Behaviour in lessons is good but pupils do not always listen or respond to questions as well as they should.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils take on responsibilities willingly. A strong moral code is implicit within the school's ethos and this is reflected in the children's positive behaviour, which is occasionally outstanding.

Children have a fair understanding of the consequences of lack of exercise and of an unhealthy diet, as shown by their participation in sporting activities and reasonably sensible eating and drinking habits when in school. They know the importance of keeping themselves safe and where to go if they are worried. They respond to the needs of others and willingly set about raising funds for charities, with each class having responsibility for a stall in the school's termly fairs. The school council is securely established and its members feel it has an influence on decisions that the school makes. Pupils' sound basic skills and their good social skills ensure that they are prepared satisfactorily for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Good teaching in the Reception classes together with very effective deployment of teaching assistants ensures that children make a good start to school. In Years 1 to 2, lessons are effectively planned and time is used well. Teachers often capture the pupils' interest; pupils think that learning is fun and give of their best.

Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well and promote good relationships. Teachers start lessons by ensuring that pupils know what is to be learned. The pupils work well together in groups, and are happy and settled in classes. They help each other to learn.

In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory. The progress that pupils make is inconsistent because teachers' planning does not always take into account assessment information and therefore build effectively on previous knowledge and understanding. This is especially so for the more able pupils who are too often not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given. This means that pupils are not making as much progress as they could. In a few lessons there is a lack of urgency and work given does not capture pupils' imagination.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The development of children's skills in Reception is well supported by an effective programme that provides good opportunities for the children to work in small groups.

The provision for literacy and numeracy is sound and ensures that learning is built upon steadily and pupils have the opportunities to undertake a broad range of work. However, recent changes to the science curriculum resulted in a few older pupils not having enough opportunities to learn all the appropriate skills and knowledge they required in the end-of-year test. This situation is now being remedied. Although good links are made between subjects in Years 1 and 2, the school correctly recognises the need to further develop these links in Years 3 to 6 so that pupils have more opportunities to apply their learning from one subject in another.

A satisfactory range of after-school activities is available for children to join and these clubs are well attended. Visits and visitors enhance and enrich the curriculum and make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' learning. Planning to support the personal needs of pupils has been strengthened since September.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Pupils are confident that adults in the school will listen to them and help sort out any concerns they have. Staff treat the pupils with respect and as a result the pupils feel

valued. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have appropriate extra support to help them understand their work. The support provided for vulnerable pupils is good. Child protection procedures are securely in place.

The use of assessment information to help pupils move forward is satisfactory. There have been a number of recent improvements. Assessment information is used more to give lessons a clear focus so that pupils can evaluate for themselves how well they are doing on a day-to-day basis. Pupils have targets for improvement but these are still very new and pupils do not yet regularly refer to them. Therefore, their usefulness is currently limited.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership of the headteacher is good. He is energetic and has quickly identified what needs to be done to improve the school. The school improvement plan is a very useful document that involves all staff and governors in influencing how the school improves. A schedule for monitoring teaching and learning has been established. This has already been instrumental in improving achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have responded well to changes and are enthusiastic about new initiatives that have been established, such as new training opportunities. The headteacher has quickly introduced a number of management strategies, including systems to track pupils' progress, but they are, as yet, at an early stage of development. The system is not yet up to speed in identifying pupils who need specific help or a greater challenge to raise their achievement.

Senior managers are responding well to the different expectations of their role and are providing valuable support for the headteacher. Subject and year leaders are beginning to understand their role within this school, but need support and training to help to contribute more effectively to raising achievement, this is planned to take place very soon. The new governing body is enthusiastic about its responsibilities. Governors are undertaking training and are now widening their monitoring role.

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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 our very warm welcome to your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and during your playtimes and were very impressed with how open and friendly you were. You gave us a lot of valuable information and this was a great help to us. We think your school is satisfactory and it gives you a satisfactory quality of education.

What we most liked about your school

- Your good behaviour and attitudes.
- Recent changes that your headteacher has made to improve your school.
- The good start children make in Reception.
- The progress you make in Years 1 and 2.
- How adults care for you and make sure you are safe.

We have asked your headteacher and others to work on

- Strengthening teaching in Years 3 to 6 by making sure that the work given to you is not too easy or difficult.
- Developing the work of the subject and year leaders so that they take a greater role in helping you improve your work.
- Improving how the school measures your progress so you can be given extra help quickly if you fall behind.

We enjoyed the visit and hope your school continues to improve.