

# New Milton Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115928
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312110
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Hilary Bonser

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Keith Beckingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sandra Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Lymington Road New Milton BH25 6PZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01425 610568
<b>Fax number</b>	01425 611138

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, many of which are disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than usual. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The school has experienced a period of staffing difficulties since the last inspection arising from extended illnesses and a fall in the number of pupils. The current headteacher was appointed in 2004. The school has recently received the Enhanced Healthy Schools, Gold Arts Mark and Active Mark awards.

## 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 with some outstanding features that enable all pupils to achieve well. Parents and pupils justifiably hold it in high regard. Excellent care, support and guidance contribute to pupils' outstanding personal development, helping them to form very good relationships and behave well. It results in a calm and happy environment where pupils are eager to learn. As one parent put it, 'Our child is very happy and loves school. She has become confident and feels secure and valued'.

Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, staffing difficulties since the last inspection have been managed very effectively. Well-planned actions by the school have minimised disruption to pupils' learning ensuring that standards have continued to rise although it is too soon to see their full effect on achievement. 'Morale is good in this school', commented another parent. The school has responded well to the issues from the last report. Standards in mathematics, for example, have risen to broadly average and are now similar to those in English. Given the pupils' low starting points on entry to the school, this reflects good achievement. In addition, well-focused staff training has further improved the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, boys and girls build well on the good start to their education in the Foundation Stage and make good progress throughout the school.

This is a school where each pupil really counts. The attention to individual learning, social and emotional needs is outstanding and provided in such a way that all pupils are fully included in school life. Excellent support is provided for pupils and for their families when they experience particular difficulties. The meticulous tracking and comparison of the progress of boys and girls of differing abilities and backgrounds helps them to achieve equally well. This is partly because teachers use the information very well to provide additional support at an early stage for any pupils who are not making the expected progress towards their targets.

Pupils really enjoy an interesting, relevant curriculum. It is reviewed continually and adjusted well to meet their particular needs. This, together with a good range of enrichment activities, adds considerably to pupils' learning and enthusiasm for school. Skilled teaching assistants also contribute very well to pupils' learning, helped by good training, close co-operation with teachers and the value placed on their work. The improving partnership with parents and close links with other schools and agencies support pupils' very positive attitudes well. Leadership and management are good overall. The school identifies its strengths, its areas for development and what is needed to remedy them accurately and is well placed to make further improvements. It is very aware that standards of more able writers, in particular, are not yet high enough and that not sufficient use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning. It is currently focusing attention on these aspects.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good provision results in children of all abilities making good progress from their individual starting points. Standards on entry to the school are below average, with many children having poorly developed language, social and emotional skills. Overall, standards are just below those expected at the end of the reception year. Very good induction arrangements and excellent care and support promote children's very good personal and social development. Most children are happy and keen to learn. They gain confidence quickly and settle very well into the routines

and expectations of school. Teaching and learning are good. All of the children benefit from the way that staff work together as a team and interact with them to develop their language and learning. The Foundation Stage leader is experienced, sensitive and astute. She leads and manages the area well. Consequently, teachers plan a wide range of interesting and engaging activities, organising classrooms and resources so that they are engaging and accessible. The outdoor area is used imaginatively and well despite some features being rather worn.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in writing, especially for more able pupils.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in ICT to support their learning in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

In Years 1 and 2, boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds continue to make good progress reaching average standards by the time they leave the school. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning over the last three years and very good attention to individual needs contribute significantly to this. Standards in mathematics show an improvement since the last inspection. The provisional 2007 national assessments at the end of Year 2 show a further steady improvement from last year in reading. A much more focused approach to the teaching of phonics and to guided reading has helped this. Results in writing showed some improvement but the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 is still not high enough. One way the school is tackling these weaknesses is to extend the use of flexible learning groups that was trialled in writing in Year 1 last year. These proved highly effective in increasing pupils' rate of progress and were popular with both parents and pupils. This year they will be used in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very happy and enjoy school greatly. Most of those asked could think of very little that they did not like or would change about it. As one pupil said, 'School is the best place because you can make new friends; it's a really joyful place.' Pupils' awe and wonder in their visits to the outdoor 'secret garden' are particularly notable. Very warm positive relationships throughout the school and an atmosphere of praise and encouragement help pupils to develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' contributions to the school community are highly valued. This term, the school council has already told staff about a meeting they have held independently because they are so keen for further improvements to toilet facilities. Such initiative and opportunities for responsibility prepare pupils well for their future lives. Pupils are developing a strong commitment to healthy lifestyles, recognized in the Active Mark and Enhanced Healthy Schools' awards. They feel safe because they are confident about the care and consideration shown by both the adults in school and other children. The school has worked hard with parents to improve attendance, but it remains below the national average, largely due to illness.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The significant improvement in teachers' skills and confidence is reflected in pupils' increasing rate of progress. Teachers are keen to try out new approaches and evaluate these carefully to see how far they are improving pupils' learning and enjoyment. They make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn, and plan varied, well-matched tasks that engage and motivate them. Most keep up a brisk pace. As a result, pupils concentrate, learn well and enjoy their lessons. Relationships are very good and the regular use of deserved praise and encouragement promotes good behaviour, confidence and positive attitudes to learning. Teachers make very good use of assessment information to adjust their planning and to provide the right kind of support to help pupils meet the high expectations of their progress. There are some variations in how well teachers focus pupils' attention on their individual targets in lessons and use marking to help pupils improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good, broad relevant curriculum that meets all requirements. It is enriched considerably by a wide range of visits, visitors and a good number of extra clubs and activities, such as science weeks. High quality music, dance and drama have been recognised in the gold standard national Arts Mark award. These contribute well to pupils' learning, personal development and enjoyment of school. Resources for information technology have improved since the last inspection but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to support their learning in other subjects. A good example of how the school responds to the particular needs of its pupils is the flexible grouping that is being developed to increase the rate of learning in English and mathematics. Booster groups are also used very effectively for this purpose. A well-planned programme of personal, social and health education has a strong emphasis on all aspects of healthy living, including emotional well-being. This promotes useful life skills that will help pupils to become responsible members of their communities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

All staff know the pupils and their individual needs very well. The support given is highly effective in promoting pupil's personal development and achievement and is greatly appreciated by parents and pupils alike. As one pupil said, 'I feel very safe because everyone is enjoying themselves. Everyone likes the school. We all take care of the new ones'. Good provision and support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language through well-matched work in lessons and additional programmes helps them to do well. Staff work very closely and effectively with the parents and carers of pupils facing particular difficulties or challenges. Procedures to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of pupils are up-to-date and thorough. The setting of very relevant individual targets helps pupils to know what to do to improve their work. The use of these in lessons is less consistent.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, ably assisted by the senior managers. The headteacher has a very clear sense of direction that is focused fully on improving standards in all areas of pupils' development. She has shared this very effectively, creating an enthusiastic staff team keen to contribute through a difficult period in the school's development. High quality staff training is helping them to meet the high expectations she has of them, with its strong emphasis on accountability and supportive teamwork. This is reflected in the improvements in teaching and learning, standards and progress. Year and subject leaders, some of whom are recently appointed, make an increasing contribution to this. There is a rigorous and accurate process of self-evaluation, in which all teachers are involved. Good account is taken of the views of governors, parents and pupils. The process is underpinned by detailed tracking and evaluation of pupils' progress that is used exceptionally well to help pupils meet their realistically, challenging targets. Governors question, contribute to and support the work of the school effectively and are developing their monitoring activities appropriately.



## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	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.

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

24 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Milton Infant School, New Milton, BH25 6PZ

I am writing to let you know what we found out when we inspected your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes and talking to you. There are many things we like about your good school.

We liked these the most:

- you enjoy school very much, behave well and work hard
- your headteacher runs the school very well indeed
- the adults in school get to know you very well and, as some of you said, they really care about each one of you and do all they can to help you
- the school provides many interesting and exciting things for you to do
- the school listens carefully to you when you suggest good ways of improving your school
- you understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise
- your teachers are good at helping you to get on well and do your best.

We have asked your teachers to help you to do even better in your writing and to arrange for you make more use of computers to help you with all of your work.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Hilary BonserLead Inspector