

Milton Parochial Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121982
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314176
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Stewart
Headteacher	Sue Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2003
School address	Green Street Milton Malsor Northampton NN7 3AT
Telephone number	01604 858816
Fax number	01604 859648

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The pupils come to the school from the village of Milton Malsor and the surrounding area. The number of pupils taking free school meals is below average. Individual attainment on entry varies, but most children are working within the levels expected for their age when they start in the Reception Year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The school has recently undergone major building developments.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This satisfactory school provides good pastoral care enabling pupils to become responsible and happy individuals. As one parent confirmed, 'My children have developed confidence, good values and are good young citizens'. The welcoming atmosphere in the school reflects the calm and caring leadership of the headteacher. Sound teaching enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily. Children make a good start in the Reception Year, where good questioning and interesting practical activities enable children to learn quickly. Progress is satisfactory in the rest of the school, leading to broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics are not as high as in English and science because the more able pupils do not always do as well as they should. Teachers do not consistently expect these pupils to complete sufficiently difficult work, particularly in mathematics. In contrast, teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well and as a result, these pupils learn quickly.

Members of staff are friendly and enthusiastic and most pupils respond positively to the encouraging praise by behaving well and working conscientiously. Teachers do not expect pupils to use their own words enough when writing about what they have learnt in science, religious education, geography and history and this limits their independence and progress in factual writing. Academic support is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils in evaluating how well they have understood lessons is a good feature, but teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to challenge all pupils.

Pupils contribute to the community exceptionally well by taking part in village events and helping each other in school. An interesting curriculum, supplemented well by visits and visitors, contributes much to pupils' enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of, school. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of staying safe and healthy. Delightful displays of pupils' artwork demonstrate the positive way that creativity is emphasised and appreciated.

Leaders are moving the school forward satisfactorily and there is a positive commitment to providing well for pupils. Senior managers work together well as a team. However, senior staff and governors do not consistently do enough to check that their actions are having a positive effect on pupils' progress. As a result, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory and not better than this.

The school's good partnership with parents and outside agencies supports pupils well. Most parents are pleased that their children come to this school. One parent spoke for many by saying, 'I have nothing but absolute respect and gratitude to all the staff at Milton'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) because they are taught well and are provided with a rich and varied curriculum. By the start of Year 1, most children are working at or beyond the expected levels for their age. Progress is especially good in personal and social development because of the adults' high expectations of children in this area. Adults give sensitive help and ensure that children settle quickly when they start school. Children especially like the way that their Year 6 'buddies' play with them and look after them. Teachers' planning ensures that there are good levels of challenge for children of differing abilities. Children have good opportunities to choose what they are going to do. Consequently, they develop good independence. Good use is made of the well-resourced outdoor area. However,

there are occasions when adults do not intervene enough in children's activities and, as a result, miss opportunities to extend learning further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater challenge for the more able pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write their own factual accounts in science, religious education, geography and history.
- Ensure that senior leaders and governors focus more sharply on checking that developments are having sufficient impact on pupils' progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Reception Year, especially in their personal and social development. By the time they start in Year 1 they are working comfortably within or beyond the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average overall, with reading being a comparative strength. Pupils make good progress in reading because the school has improved resources and targeted support carefully. Standards in mathematics are slightly weaker than in other subjects. Targets for pupils' standards at the end of each year are realistic, although they are not consistently challenging enough for the more able pupils. Consequently, pupils' progress from the start of Year 1 to the end of Year 6 is satisfactory overall, with some more able pupils not achieving as well as they should, especially in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because teachers and teaching assistants give them good support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very positive about their work and are keen to do their best. Rates of attendance are good, reflecting pupils' thorough enjoyment of school. Pupils behave well and talk very enthusiastically about all aspects of school life. As one pupil said, 'I wouldn't change anything'. From when they start in the Reception Year, pupils quickly learn to care for and respect others. Pupils are sociable and articulate and are very polite and friendly to visitors. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility and they do this well, making an outstanding contribution to the community. Older pupils take on many additional tasks to help teachers, and school councillors played a prominent role in designing the recently re-introduced hot school lunches. Pupils' ready acceptance of responsibility, along with their satisfactory basic skills, prepares them soundly for the next stage of their education and later life. Pupils show good concern for the needs of others. They raise funds for charities, including supporting a partner school in Zambia, and distribute harvest produce to villagers. Pupils who are road safety officers help others to develop a good understanding of how to stay safe. Pupils are conscientious about adopting healthy lifestyles. They eat healthy snacks at playtime, take part enthusiastically in several sports and explain how 'the occasional treat like chocolate or crisps is not bad for you'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Children learn quickly in the Reception Year because good teaching ensures that their differing learning needs are met well. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is sound with some good features. Teachers are enthusiastic and manage pupils' behaviour well. They use modern technology skilfully to illustrate and reinforce learning and they plan exciting activities that motivate and engage pupils well. However, teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to work independently and do not always pitch work at the right level, especially for the more able pupils in mathematics. When work is not challenging enough, the pace of learning is too slow. In Years 5 and 6, good homework extends skills introduced in class. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a very wide range of experiences both in and out of lessons. Creativity is fostered imaginatively and, as a result, pupils produce good work in art and music. Pupils are very proud of their visit to the Royal Albert Hall when the school choir sang at 'The School Proms'. Good links with local sports clubs make a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. The curriculum includes good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and good use is made of intervention programmes to meet their needs. The school is developing links between different subjects in order to make learning even more purposeful. Pupils do not always have enough opportunity to improve their independent writing skills by using them across the curriculum.

Pupils are right to be pleased with the good variety of clubs, visits and visitors offered by the school. These extend pupils' awareness of the wider world and support their personal development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Members of staff care for the pupils well. High quality pastoral support makes this a happy school where pupils are keen to do their best. As one parent said, 'teachers genuinely care for all the children'. Pupils know that they can turn to members of staff if they have problems. There are good links with professionals, such as the school nurse, to ensure that pupils are kept safe and well. Academic support is satisfactory. There are thorough systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics and less able pupils who need help to catch up are supported well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have detailed individual education plans that help them to learn quickly. Teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan suitable work for more able pupils, and their marking does not always give clear enough guidance on how pupils should improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's friendly and welcoming atmosphere supports the pupils' personal development well and ensures that the school runs smoothly. Members of staff and governors are enthusiastic and have worked hard at improving the building and learning resources. They know that they are not yet doing enough to ensure that all pupils make the full progress of which they are capable.

Governance is satisfactory. The new governors are expanding their roles so that they can question senior leaders more rigorously about school effectiveness. Teachers with responsibilities for leading subjects have clear plans to develop the subjects they manage. However, they are not fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the influence of provision on pupils' progress so that they can check that developments are having sufficient impact.

The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory. There is a clear understanding about what needs to be improved, although the school's assessment of itself is too generous. The headteacher monitors teaching frequently and there are signs that actions taken are having positive results. For example, recent strategies to improve pupils' progress in reading have been successful and demonstrate the school's sound capacity to improve.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	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 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	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils Inspection of Milton Parochial Primary School, Northampton, NN7 3AT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. While it does some things well, there are other things that need to be improved.

- Here are some other things we found out about you and your school:
- You make good progress in the Reception Year.
- You make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6 and reach average standards, but those of you who are quick at learning could be helped to do better especially in mathematics.
- You are polite, behave sensibly and take responsibility well. We like your 'buddies' system and your thumbs up when you have done well.
- Teaching is satisfactory and members of staff help to make learning interesting.
- You study a good range of things in lessons and clubs.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and they look after you well.
- Your headteacher, other teachers and governors are committed to making your school even better.
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you enjoy coming to this school.
- What we have asked your school to do now:
- Help those of you who are quick learners to do better, especially in mathematics.
- Provide you with more opportunities to decide what you are going to write in science, religious education, geography and history.
- Ensure that teachers check that the changes they make in the school are helping you to make better progress.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this friendly school and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge Lead inspector

Annex B

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Milton Parochial Primary School,
Northampton, NN7 3AT**



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Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge
Lead inspector

