

# Little Milton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123198
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314538
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou

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	65
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Caroline Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Eve Hunter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Stadhampton Road Little Milton Oxford OX44 7QD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 279310
<b>Fax number</b>	01844 279310

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas:

- the quality of teaching and the curriculum, and their impact on pupils' academic and personal development;
- the opportunities provided for pupils to apply their skills in subjects across the curriculum;
- the ways in which pupils assess and understand their own learning;
- the extent to which the school acts on pupils' and parents' views.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the analysis of test results and assessments of pupils' performance, as well as parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Little Milton is a very small rural village school. It has close links with its parish church and other schools. The majority of pupils come from outside the village and locality of the school. Pupils are taught in four classes, three of which are of mixed-age. Reception children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. Some started school part-time in September when they were four-years-old. All Reception aged children attend full-time in the term of their fifth birthday. The vast majority of pupils are White British and a small number come from a range of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low compared with schools nationally. A small number of pupils have learning difficulties and require additional support in lessons. The school has increased in size since being awarded primary school status in 2003 when the age of transfer was increased from Year 4 to Year 6.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Little Milton provides a good education. It has some outstanding features that have a positive effect on pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. As a result of consistently good teaching, pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and governors have accurately evaluated the performance of pupils and staff to secure excellent improvements to the school since its last inspection. Well-devised staff training and much improved resources have successfully transformed this traditional village school into a modern, well-equipped primary school. The overwhelming majority of parents pay tribute to the efforts of staff and governors. Many confirm that the school has excellent working relationships with them, as one explained, 'The staff are always available if you need to discuss any issue.' Another parent expressed the views of many when commenting that she was, 'Very happy with the level of care and teaching'.

Achievement throughout the school is good. Reception children make good progress as a result of effective teaching, and a well-planned and stimulating curriculum. The majority of children start school with skills and abilities that are above those expected of four and five-year-olds. Standards by the end of Year 2 are high in reading, writing and mathematics. As numbers increase in Years 5 and 6, standards have consistently improved each year and are well above average. Very small numbers take national tests in Year 6, so there are likely to be fluctuations in overall standards compared with national norms. Despite this, assessments of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 show that they are all making good progress, and in some year groups, standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science.

Teachers are very effective in planning lessons for mixed-age classes. They skilfully tailor work so that it closely matches the range of needs and abilities. Teaching assistants provide skilled support for pupils who need extra help. Pupils of higher ability are often provided with extension tasks and there are good opportunities for pupils to work with partners or groups so they can share ideas. The climate for learning in all classes is very positive so that pupils are extremely well behaved and attentive. Teachers are good at explaining each lesson's objectives and provide challenging curriculum targets for pupils to aim for. The targets are skilfully arranged into manageable steps so pupils understand each stage of their learning. There is scope to build on this, as pupils do not always get enough time in lessons to self-correct or assess how well they are doing. In the most effective lessons, there are good opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking. In an excellent mathematics lesson for example, pupils in Year 2 solved number problems and identified number patterns by explaining their methods to the rest of the class.

The pupils are extremely well behaved and considerate to others. They happily work and play together. One explained, 'I love this school because there are lots of friends and there is always someone around to help you.' Pupils enjoy school very much. This is reflected in the school's excellent attendance rates and pupils' enthusiastic involvement in the recent musical production. The school provides a good and balanced curriculum. Colourful and lively displays of work in every class show how much the staff value pupils' efforts. Pupils have good opportunities to apply core skills learned in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) to special projects and themes that draw in other subjects such as art, music, history and geography. A good start has been made developing ways of measuring pupils' performance in different subjects. There is still more to do to devise systematic assessments in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT to ensure that the staff can accurately evaluate rates of progress made by pupils in all subjects, and provide appropriate

support and challenge where necessary. Pupils use ICT skills very well to support their learning and teachers are very good at illustrating key learning points using interactive whiteboards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are adept at using computers to combine graphics and text to produce high quality presentations. For example, the pupils were observed editing and refining adverts that included persuasive writing, 'snappy slogans' and headlines as part of their literacy work. Good achievement and the acquisition of core ICT skills such as these, together with reading, writing and mathematics, prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. They reflect thoughtfully during stimulating assemblies. Pupils have a good understanding of customs and cultures from around the world. There are excellent opportunities for them to participate in local events such as the Ascension Day walk, or visits to the church and local area. Pupils have been very active in charitable fundraising, for example, for a school in South Africa. Healthy eating is encouraged. For example, pupils recently visited a top class restaurant and worked with a master chef using local produce to make a variety of foods. Pupils feel safe and secure because the staff are vigilant and provide strong pastoral support and care. Excellent outdoor resources and climbing equipment encourage the pupils to be very active at break-times. A few parents would like the school to provide more sports, although the school is increasingly doing so through its good range of after-school clubs and its links with nearby schools.

The headteacher and governors are innovative and are always seeking ways to improve the school through excellent partnerships with parents and other schools. The headteacher provides strong leadership and often consults pupils and parents. Governors are ambitious and very active in helping the school to grow. The school's ambitious five-year plan sets out core values and projects. These have been agreed with parents and the local community demonstrating how well the school involves and consults parents. The school is well placed to move forward and build on these good foundations.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage is well managed and resourced. The staff skilfully provide purposeful activities that stimulate and challenge Reception children. Their planning ensures that the specific learning needs of the children are met within this mixed-age class. The children progress well and work comfortably within the early stages of the National Curriculum by the time they start Year 1. Children thoroughly enjoy indoor and outdoor activities. These successfully develop early reading, writing and mathematics skills. Traditional stories, such as the 'Enormous Turnip', are used very well to improve the children's knowledge of letters and sounds, as well as their understanding of the chronology and sequence of events. The children are prompted to explain their ideas, for example, when observing the behaviour of snails in the outdoor area. There are some missed opportunities for them to generate their own ideas or to ask probing questions without being prompted by adults. The improved outdoor area provides wonderful opportunities for the children to explore the natural world. Consequently, the children develop their confidence, self-esteem and communication skills.

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

- Build in more time during lessons for pupils to assess their own learning and improve their work.
- Extend assessment to all subjects so that teachers can check and monitor pupils' performance across the curriculum.

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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?	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?	1
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	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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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

23 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Little Milton Church of England Primary School, Oxford, OX44 7QD

You were all so welcoming when I came to see you and I really enjoyed talking to many of you during the day. I think you go to a good school. I can see why you love going to school so much. Your parents like the school very much as well. I know this because most have written to me to say so.

Well done to you and all the staff and governors. You are so lucky to have such caring people looking after you. I really loved looking at your beautifully displayed work, paintings and ICT work, as well as the video of your recent musical play. That was great and I can see why your parents liked it so much. I was very pleased with your excellent behaviour and the way you all play and work together so well. The Reception children are really good at learning stories, singing rhymes and songs and together with the pupils in Year 1, they have exciting things to learn. I know that the children found those enormous snails very interesting!

Throughout the school, I think you are all doing well with your reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT work. I would like you all to keep working hard because your teachers are providing you with good challenges and I can see from your test results that you are doing well in your studies and reach good standards. Your headteacher and governors are doing a really good job too, especially in helping the school to grow and develop still further. They have some excellent plans which they have shared with parents about further improvements to the school and its resources.

I have asked your teachers to help you do even better by giving you more time in lessons to correct and improve your work. I have also asked them to find more ways of checking your work in all subjects so they can measure how well you are doing very closely. You can help too, by explaining to your teachers the things you find easy and some of things that you find harder to learn.

I wish you and your parents the very best and I am so pleased to have met you all, you were all great!

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector