

# Little Mead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134863
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	316286
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Hancock

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Liz Powell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Daykin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Gosforth Road Bristol BS10 6DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01173 773279
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 377 2172

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Little Mead Primary School is larger than the average-sized school with an attached Nursery. The school was opened in September 2006 following the closure of two local primary schools, and the number on roll is increasing. The school serves an area of Bristol with significant social disadvantage and a very high proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds but the proportion of ethnic minority families has significantly increased this year, including those who speak English as an additional language. A small proportion of pupils who attend the school are in the care of the local authority. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award and the International Standard Intermediate Award.

## 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 rapidly improving school and its effectiveness is satisfactory. Much has been achieved since September 2006 when the school opened and it now has many good features. Most parents appreciate the commitment and friendliness of the staff. The views of one parent are typical of many and emphasise the progress made since the school opened. 'Little Mead has improved a great deal since the amalgamation, including the behaviour and general atmosphere. My son enjoys his lessons and is always encouraged to achieve better grades.' Strengths in pastoral care, cultural development and working effectively in partnership with others contribute much to pupils' good personal development and well-being. The outcomes can be seen in happy pupils who enjoy their lessons, behave well, feel safe and get on well together. They enjoy exercise and have a good understanding of adopting healthy lifestyles.

Academic achievement is satisfactory overall but standards are below average throughout the school. Children enter school with skill levels much lower than those expected for their age. They settle quickly and make at least satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, in particular in their personal, social and emotional development. However, activities are not always well organised in the Reception class to meet the needs of young children, which has an adverse impact on the progress they make in their early learning goals. Teaching and learning are good and have been improved by good professional development and regular monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff. Assessment information, including careful tracking, has significantly improved standards in English but the school accepts that standards and achievement are not high enough in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the help given by teachers and support staff and make similar progress to their classmates. The increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress, particularly in the acquisition of English. The curriculum is satisfactory but new approaches have resulted in a more interesting and stimulating curriculum that has captured pupils' imaginations, particularly those of boys, and increased their achievement and enjoyment of learning.

The headteacher has a very clear vision of what is needed to improve the school further and provides very strong leadership, working closely and effectively with the deputy headteacher. Their hard work and commitment are very strong features in the school's satisfactory leadership and management. They are well supported by the senior leadership team and have built up a strong team spirit among staff. The role of subject leaders in English, mathematics and science and that of governors has appropriately been identified as key areas to develop so that they are more pro-actively involved in self-assessment and school improvement. With the improved involvement of subject leaders and governors and the continued success of recent actions and initiatives, including the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, the school demonstrates a good capacity for further development.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with standards well below those expected for their age in all areas of learning and particularly in the crucial areas of language, literacy and personal, social and emotional development. They get off to a good start in the stimulating environment of the school's nursery. In this safe and nurturing environment, children are encouraged to develop confidence and become independent and tidy away resources themselves. Great emphasis is

placed on speaking and listening and on the children's personal development and the children make good progress in these aspects of their learning. However, provision in the Reception class, although satisfactory, is not as well geared to the needs of young children, where teaching is not always centred closely enough on the early learning goals. Sometimes, the development of independence is inhibited because activities are too teacher led. Learning diaries throughout the Foundation Stage provide a good continual photographic and written record of each child's progress. Links with parents are formed before children start school through home visits and parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. Children are well supported by trained teaching assistants and nursery nurses. All children achieve satisfactorily but standards are below expectations when they enter Year 1, where the majority are still working on the early learning goals.

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

- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics and science by ensuring teachers carefully track individual pupils' progress and provide appropriate activities so that they reach their full potential.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage by ensuring that teaching methods consistently support and challenge all children and activities are consistently planned to meet the needs of young children.
- Make sure subject leaders in English, mathematics and science and governors play a full part in monitoring the school's performance to bring about improvement.

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 throughout the school is satisfactory. In 2007, standards at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and significantly below in mathematics and writing. Boys did significantly less well than girls, particularly in writing. The school has introduced new initiatives to improve the progress of different groups of pupils, including additional support, improved tracking and a more creative curriculum. As a result, standards and achievement have risen for all groups, including boys in mathematics and in writing, but standards remain below average at the end of Year 2.

Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were broadly average in English but significantly below in mathematics and science, where there was evidence of underachievement for many pupils. Inspection findings indicate that the school's initiatives to improve standards, such as smaller class sizes and regular booster groups for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science, are having a positive impact on raising pupils' achievements. More opportunities are given for pupils to use and apply their knowledge in mathematics and for scientific enquiry. This is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards but they are below average at the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including vulnerable pupils, achieve at a similar rate to their peers. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language benefit from the support given them and make at least satisfactory and often good progress, particularly in acquisition of language.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. They speak enthusiastically of improvements made to behaviour in the school and of their involvement in devising class rules. Pupils enjoy their lessons and extra-curricular activities, and many were eager to talk about the numerous experiences offered to them. Consequently, attendance has risen and is now slightly below the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with cultural development a particular strength. They have strong links with a school in India, enabling pupils to explore closely the experiences of childhood in a different country. Pupils feel safe and know they can go to an adult with any worries. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and of the importance of healthy food, and their recent survey resulted in changing school lunches to include more fresh local fruit. Pupils make a positive contribution to both the school and local community. Members of the school council were proud to talk about their contribution to purchasing new playground equipment, which they use effectively to keep them fit and healthy. Pupils' positive approach to learning bodes well for their future education, although their academic progress has room for further acceleration.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching is typical throughout the school. It has improved markedly through the regular monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff. This ensures that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. Warm and constructive relationships in class foster enjoyment in learning and have positive effects on pupils' personal development. The consistent approach to treating pupils positively encourages them to join in and behave well. Much teaching is engaging and confident. Work is usually matched to the full range of learners' needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those speaking English as an additional language, but tasks are not always sufficiently demanding. The best questioning challenges pupils and they respond well. In some lessons, questions lack incisiveness and do not steer pupils to greater learning gains. In many classes, pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve and talk about specific targets. However, marking is not used consistently well enough across the school to effectively support all pupils' learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is satisfactory overall but has many good and commendable features. A new creative and innovative curriculum matches the needs of pupils far more closely, capturing the imagination of many. A range of new initiatives and intervention programmes for reading, writing, mathematics and science are beginning to improve standards but the school acknowledges that more work needs to be done to see their full impact. Currently, there are insufficient opportunities for investigation and experimental work across the school to effectively improve standards in science. Learning is extended well through a wide range of special events, visits and visitors. These have a positive effect on pupils' interest in school and strengthen links with the local community. High emphasis is placed on developing pupils' personal, social and health education. This prepares them well for their future and helps them stay healthy and safe.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Teachers and staff place a high priority on pupils' safety and well-being. They know pupils well. They have a good knowledge of their social and emotional needs and provide them with good pastoral support and guidance within a warm, supportive, family atmosphere. Parents are positive about the care shown to their children, reflected in comments, such as 'I feel Little Mead is a warm and friendly school'. Child protection procedures are fully in place and risk assessments are carried out conscientiously. Substantial links with external agencies support all pupils and their families well, including looked-after children. Although the tracking of pupils' progress is in the early stages of development, especially for science, the data are being used to set individual targets. This is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards, particularly in English.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher, staff and governors are strongly committed to school improvement and have made significant gains since the school opened in September 2006. The local education authority is pleased with the progress made during this time and is very confident that the school has a good capacity to lead its own further improvement. The work of the school is driven by the very good leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who have a very clear vision for the future. They have high expectations to ensure all pupils achieve their best. They are supported well by the senior leadership team, who continually explore ways to improve the quality of education. However, the role of subject leaders now needs to be strengthened and developed so that they can contribute more effectively to school improvement in English, mathematics and science.

The quality of the school's self-evaluation is good. It clearly identifies areas for improvement. Effective systems for tracking pupils' progress are already bringing about improvement to their achievements. Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough. It pinpoints precisely how and where improvements are to be made. The headteacher provides good opportunities for professional development. As a result, lessons are becoming increasingly effective but more time is needed for standards to improve significantly. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are supportive of the school and have a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Many are attending training sessions to gain a greater understanding of how they can monitor the school's effectiveness more accurately.





## 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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
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

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	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### 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?	3
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>	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	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	3
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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Little Mead Primary School, Southmead, Bristol BS10 6DS

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to your school. We enjoyed talking to you very much and thought you were very friendly.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education and these are some things we thought were good.

- You enjoy school and behave well.
- You have a good understanding of how important it is to eat healthy food and keep fit by regular exercise.
- You like the clubs you attend, visits outside school and learning about children in India.
- Your lessons are good and teachers and adults look after you well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make your school better.

These are a few things the school should do to make it better.

- Teachers should help you improve your work, especially in mathematics and science.
- Improve the things you do in Reception class so that all of you are given activities that will help you learn more and make better progress.
- Make sure that senior teachers responsible for English, mathematics and science and the governors are more involved in checking how well you are doing to help your school get even better.

Best wishes for the future.

Ian Hancock Lead inspector