

# Milton Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135189
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	319617
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anna Sketchley

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	388
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Norman Donovan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sara Hedger
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Milton Park Road Weston-Super-Mare BS22 8DY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 624 868
<b>Fax number</b>	01934 620515

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Milton Park Primary is a new school formed from previously separate and now amalgamated infant and junior schools in September 2007. It is situated on the northern edge of Weston-Super-Mare. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These cover a range of needs, particularly moderate learning and some behavioural difficulties. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups and some of these are in the early stages of learning English.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Milton Park Primary is a good school. It serves the community well and has two outstanding features. The first is the very real enjoyment pupils show in being at school. They thoroughly appreciate the good teaching, exciting curriculum and wide range of activities offered to them and the fun they have in learning. As a result, attendance has improved significantly throughout the year and procedures for ensuring that it continues to rise are very good. In the words of one pupil, 'This is a great school and it's getting even better'. The second outstanding feature is the way that all pupils are included in everything that is on offer. The needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well understood. A special programme for developing social and learning skills assists all pupils with their personal development, but particularly helps those with behavioural and emotional difficulties to work together with others. This has significantly improved behaviour, which is now good, and is partly responsible for the calm and positive learning environment in each class.

The recent amalgamation has been very challenging but enormous progress has been made in the last ten months. There is rigorous attention to detail in promoting academic progress but this does not take away from the ethos of enjoyment and excitement that is generated in the school. Although children join school with skills well below those expected in some aspects of communication, language, literacy and mathematical development, they make a good start in Reception and continue to achieve well throughout the school. Recent assessments show that standards are rising rapidly, although standards in writing are still below average and pupils do not always take as much pride in the presentation of their work as they could. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in reading and mathematics are broadly average and above average in science. The teaching of science is a strength of the school. The good progress in all these subjects is partly due to good teaching, as well as rigorous monitoring, excellent tracking and thorough assessment procedures. Systems for checking pupils' progress are used consistently well to identify the needs of all pupils.

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are developing a really good attitude to school and take full advantage of all the opportunities they are given to gain confidence and self-esteem, through such exciting events as the 'Milton's Got Talent' competition. They told inspectors 'it's cool to come to school'. The pastoral care of pupils is excellent and they and their parents are well aware of how well looked after they are and they really appreciate the family 'feel' of the school. Pupils have targets to help guide their improvement academically but are not yet sufficiently involved in identifying the next steps of their learning. Comments in marking are not always informative enough to ensure that pupils are always clear about what they could do to improve their work.

The successful start to this new school has come about through the inspirational leadership and management of the headteacher, along with the commitment of the whole school community. There is a real team spirit and a common purpose to raise standards but a determination to do it by including everyone and by making learning fun. The senior management team are exceptionally analytical. They have set very challenging targets for the future and there is good capacity to meet these and improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children in Reception make good progress because there is the right balance between adult-led activities and those that children undertake independently. Personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. The good induction procedures ensure a settled start and provision is exciting yet nurturing, with the emphasis on building the confidence of each individual child. These gains in personal and social skills prepare children well for future learning. Behaviour is managed very well and relationships are calm and warm. As a result, there is a high level of trust between children and adults and children are very at ease with those around them. Teaching is skilled and enables all children to participate fully in the exciting range of activities planned for them. During the inspection, a review of the previous day's visit to a zoo, using photographs, gave the pupils very good opportunities to relive their experiences and express their thoughts. This in turn reinforced good speaking and listening skills, making a significant contribution to children's ability to communicate well. Despite a real effort to make the classrooms lively and stimulating with colourful displays, the existing rather confined and dark spaces do not provide a sufficiently flexible environment for children's learning. The school has appropriate plans for adapting the indoor accommodation.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and encourage pupils to take a greater pride in the presentation of their work.
- Give pupils a greater understanding of how to improve their work through more informative marking and increased involvement in setting their own targets.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Since the new school opened, there has been rigorous action to improve pupils' progress. Recent assessments show that pupils achieve well throughout the infant years despite the very low skills they have when they join the school. By the end of the Reception Year, children have moved on well although standards are still below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. In all other areas of development, children reach the expected standards by the end of Reception. By the end of Year 2, they reach standards that are broadly average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. School tracking shows that the overall picture of good progress is consistent throughout the junior years. In this first year, the school has exceeded all its targets. Year 6 standards in mathematics are average and, despite below average standards in writing, the school has been particularly successful in significantly raising standards in English overall and these are also broadly average. Through the use of rigorous tracking and assessment, the school is improving standards across all year groups and demonstrating that the good progress made this year is sustainable.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' attitude to school is good and the challenging behaviour of a few pupils does not now disrupt other pupils' learning. Relationships are extremely strong and pupils like having many friends. Bullying is minimal and pupils have a very clear idea of how to keep safe and a good understanding of how to deal with any difficulties they might face. They know that there is

always someone to go to if they need support. They have a very good understanding of how to keep healthy and try hard to practise a healthy lifestyle. Moral and social development is particularly strong because adults are good role models and pupils know the boundaries and are motivated towards self-discipline. Cultural development through the creative arts, especially music, is strong. Pupils' awareness of living in a multicultural society in modern Britain is satisfactory. The school council works well and the skills pupils learn as a result of this, together with their literacy and numeracy skills, are beginning to help them prepare for the future. However, they do not have a sufficient understanding of the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan exciting lessons and have high expectations of both work and behaviour. Lessons are characterised by interesting tasks that often involve challenging problems and meet the needs of most pupils. Just occasionally, more able pupils could be challenged even further. Interactive whiteboards are used particularly well to capture pupils' interest and reinforce what they are to learn. The pace of lessons is very good and teachers' questioning focuses on encouraging pupils to think and explain what they know, ensuring that they all participate fully in the lesson and make good progress. Marking is variable and it does not always tell pupils how they can improve their work and pupils do not have enough involvement in setting their targets. Therefore, it is difficult for them to assess how well they think they have learned by the end of the lesson and over time. This limits their knowledge of the next steps they should take to improve their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is well matched to pupils' needs and interests and is engaging, therefore it enables pupils to make good progress. The emphasis is on learning through fun and this allows pupils to be excited by their learning. The school is aware of the need to improve writing, and a number of strategies have been introduced that are beginning to have an impact upon standards. A new phonics programme has been put in place to help improve reading and writing as well as a strategy to improve sentence writing. Topics such as Dr Who are particularly engaging the interest of boys. Although science is a strength of the school because of a well-planned broad range of opportunities for pupils to develop scientific enquiry skills, pupils' writing skills impede their recording. However, there are good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and computer skills because of good links between subjects. The good personal, social and health education programme, allowing pupils to talk about their feelings, is another contributory factor to improved behaviour. Extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors all further enrich this creative curriculum. Music tuition is particularly strong.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is outstanding and is extended to parents and the community. The school realises its obligations to the community and is committed to keeping its pupils safe. Parents are very pleased with the level of care and support offered to their children and, in the words of one parent, 'The school provides excellent care and support for all pupils and encourages individuality

and independence. The amalgamation was very successful and has led to many improvements across the school.' Attendance is broadly satisfactory. It is better than it was and the school has very good procedures in place to deal with the few pupils who do not come to school regularly.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Knowledge of these pupils is extremely precise and leads to tailored learning delivered by supportive and skilled teaching assistants who enable them to make good progress. The efforts of the learning mentor in developing links with parents are particularly appreciated by the parents concerned. The school and parents are well supported by outside agencies. Academic guidance, through targets and marking, is a less well developed area.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Although it is early days in the life of this new school, the headteacher has built a cohesive team and the school has made good progress. The headteacher is empowering people to take responsibility and this has developed an enthusiastic and dedicated team who are optimistic about improvement. Leaders at all levels have a very clear vision for the future, with roles and responsibilities developing well. School self-evaluation is a strong feature and identifies the correct priorities. The impact of strategies is very closely monitored and the whole school community is very aware of their responsibility to deliver an excellent education. Analysis of pupils' progress is outstanding and is a significant factor in the good progress pupils are making because resources are directed towards meeting pupils' needs. Governors are fully involved in the strategic direction of the school and, as well as offering good challenge as critical friends, they are very supportive. Most parents are extremely supportive of the school and appreciative of the support that it offers within the community, although a few would like more regular communication between home and school.

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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	NA
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?	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	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?	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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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

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

18 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Milton Primary School, Weston-super-Mare BS22 8DY.

Thank you very much for the warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking with you. We especially enjoyed watching 'Milton's Got Talent' and listening to the violin concert.. You are involved in many exciting activities and your school provides you with a good education.

These are some of the things we found:

- You make good progress and achieve the same standards as most pupils in the country by the time you move to secondary school.
- You enjoy school very much and appreciate all the extra activities the school provides for you.
- You know well how to keep healthy and safe.
- You care for one another, get on very well together and your behaviour is good. Well done!
- You and your parents told us how well the school takes care of you and we agree that this is excellent.
- Your headteacher, teachers and all other adults lead your school well. They make sure that the teaching and curriculum are good.

We have suggested two things to make your learning even better.

- We have asked your school to help all of you to reach higher standards in writing and we would like you to take more pride in the presentation of your work.
- We have also asked the school to help you set targets for your work and tell you when you have met your targets. We would like them to show you how to improve your work when they mark it.

Thank you once again for your help.

With best wishes

Anna Sketchley Lead Inspector



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Lead Inspector