

Mount Wise Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113300
Local Authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	338140
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Goodchild

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Edward-Jones
Headteacher	Chris West
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection, 25 lessons were observed and nine teachers were seen. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher. Pupils' books were inspected to assess the quality of marking and if targets relating to progress and improvement were set. The school's assessment data on current progress were analysed, to determine if there was sufficient challenge for all pupils in the predicted outcomes for Year 2 and Year 6. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and members of staff responsible for aspects of the school's work. The school improvement plan, School Improvement Partner's reports, minutes of the governing body and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding were scrutinised. Forty-three parents and carers completed the parental questionnaire. The team also looked at questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of strategies to raise standards in English, particularly writing
- the quality of monitoring of teaching and learning and the use of assessment
- the effectiveness of the school's provision to raise pupils' awareness of the need to develop healthy lifestyles
- the effectiveness of the governing body in monitoring the work of the school.

Information about the school

Mount Wise is a smaller than average primary school serving one of the most socially and economically disadvantaged areas of the city. About 50% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Virtually all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average. The majority of these relate to behaviour, emotional and social problems and communication and language difficulties. As the result of the recent regeneration and housing development programmes in Devonport, the school now has a more stable population. Currently, the number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time is slightly above the national average.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Mount Wise Community Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school. It provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils with some good and outstanding elements. Its strength is in the outstanding care and support given to its pupils. In the warm and welcoming learning environment pupils feel extremely safe and develop the necessary skills to be able to access learning. Pupils clearly enjoy school very much and demonstrate excellent behaviour both in lessons and around the school. Pupils make a full contribution to the school community and there are many opportunities for them to take responsibility and develop leadership skills, for example through the school council. Pupils develop healthy lifestyles to an outstanding extent, as shown by their involvement in a wide range of physical activities such as high attendance at the lunchtime 'Fitkids' Club. The healthy lunch box initiative is well supported by parents. Pupils apply themselves well in lessons and persevere when experiencing difficulties and it is clear the majority are highly motivated to succeed. The excellent partnership the school has with its parents helps them to support their children's learning. Parents who completed the questionnaire expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school and their children's experience. They valued the supporting and caring attitudes of staff and were confident their children were having a positive introduction to school life.

Pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. In lessons seen it ranged from outstanding to satisfactory with a consequently varied impact on the progress that pupils made. One reason for these variations is the lack of rigour in the way teaching is monitored. Lesson observations are not linked to the progress pupils are making. This is particularly relevant in Years 1 and 2 where data show that pupils are not making the expected gains in their learning. It was evident in some lessons that assessment information was not being used to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils were addressed. In particular, there was a lack of challenge for more able pupils. At times teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve were not sufficiently high. Although progress is tracked termly by senior leadership, the benchmark they use is satisfactory rather than good progress. The pastoral care, support and guidance that pupils receive is outstanding and contributes significantly to the progress made by all pupils but particularly vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are able to demonstrate a high degree of independence and work on tasks with little adult supervision. As in the main school, they receive a high degree of well-targeted support for their personal and social development that enables them to make good progress from a low starting point and

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start Year 1 in line with national expectations.

The school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory. It has recognised that having established a good learning environment, it now has to concentrate on raising attainment and progress. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory and has identified appropriate priorities for development, such as the need to raise attainment in English, particularly writing. Current evidence suggests that the strategies introduced to address this are beginning to raise pupils' levels of attainment and progress. Less evident is progress towards addressing issues of underachievement in Years 1 and 2. The governing body is now in a better position to monitor the work of the school. It has set targets for improvement to address weaknesses in pupils' performance in national tests, and is now more strategically involved in school development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, particularly writing, across the school, and ensure that assessment information is used more effectively to plan lessons that match the learning needs of pupils, particularly the more able.
- Implement rigorous, structured monitoring of teaching so that the quality in all lessons matches the best practice in the school.
- Improve the progress that pupils make in their learning in Years 1 and 2.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

By the end of 2009 results in national tests showed that pupils in Year 6 made satisfactory progress overall and their attainment was broadly in line with national expectations apart from in English. The progress they made in mathematics was above national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made better progress than their peers. Inspection evidence shows that for most pupils the intervention programme for improving writing is beginning to raise their attainment. Given the opportunity, pupils respond well to opportunities to use real-life situations in their writing. For example, those in Year 5 have recently undertaken a project on healthy food that involved caterers, supermarkets and an organic farm.

Pupils' ability to monitor their progress and understand the level they are working at is restricted as learning targets are not consistently set. In a discussion with some pupils, all felt they were achieving well in their studies and it was evident they enjoyed school and the opportunities it offered. They were particularly well informed about healthy lifestyles and felt this had an impact on their activities and eating outside of school. Older pupils act as good role models for younger pupils, for example by supporting Nursery children at lunchtime, and acting as peer mediators, class and team captains. Pupils show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves and willingly raise funds for charities or disaster appeals. They have many opportunities to work with community groups and have recently looked at local history and the sustainability of economic activity. The school choir gives public performances and recently was the only school in Plymouth invited to take part in the Exeter Chorister Outreach Project. The spiritual,

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moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good but their understanding of life in an ethnically diverse society is limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good or better, expectations are high, the pace of learning is rapid and activities are planned to address all their individual learning needs. Effective use is made of ongoing assessment to inform planning lessons to build on prior learning and challenge all pupils. It was evident this information had been used well in a mathematics lesson, where more able pupils acted as learning mentors to their peers and in the process consolidated their learning. In these lessons, pupils make good progress. Too often these features were not evident, especially the use of assessment to inform lesson planning to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met. In most lessons, teaching assistants are well deployed to support learning effectively. The good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be attributed in part to this support.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The high quality provision for health education has given pupils the knowledge they need to develop healthy lifestyles beyond school. The excellent partnerships with the community contribute significantly to the wide range of learning opportunities the curriculum provides. Opportunities to develop pupils' basic skills across the curriculum are evident in current work in some classes but such activities are not consistent across the school. Pupils say there are few opportunities for them to use information and communication technology (ICT) in their work. Pupils are taught French from Year 3 and links have been developed with a school in Brittany. The school ensures that all pupils have the same opportunities to take part in activities such as after-school clubs and the choir and there is high take up. Care has been taken to provide physical activities that engage girls. The provision through Excellence in Cities for gifted and talented pupils is good and pupils work alongside those from other schools. Enrichment activities, such as residential visits, an extensive range of trips, and visitors to the school, contribute towards pupils' personal development and raise their aspirations.

Arrangements to ensure the care and welfare of pupils are outstanding. Parents are happy with the support their children receive and confident they are kept safe and their welfare needs met. The high quality links with the local authority, external agencies and health professionals ensure appropriate support is provided to meet the diverse range of need of pupils and their families. Progress tracking data are used well to make sure that vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are receiving the appropriate support. Pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school through a comprehensive induction programme. Great care is taken to ensure that the appropriate placements are identified to ensure pupils' needs continue to be met. Parents and carers are fully involved with the school if difficulties occur and they are well supported by parent support and family welfare staff.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has successfully established a learning ethos in the school and through the staff equips pupils with the personal and social skills to be able to access education. The senior leadership and governing body are ambitious for the school and share a common aim of continuing improvement. There has been a lack of rigour in monitoring teaching and learning that has resulted in a variable quality of teaching and in some pupils not making expected progress. Although targets are set for the end of Years 2

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and 6 they do not provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able. There is a good working partnership with the governors, many of whom are newly appointed. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the school and have set challenging targets for the headteacher based on careful analysis of outcomes of national tests and self-evaluation. Safeguarding procedures are effective, including those for ensuring safe recruitment. Leaders appropriately tackle discrimination and ensure equal opportunity. The school has an excellent partnership with pupils' parents and carers. There are termly meetings to discuss progress and information is given to help them support pupils' learning. In support of the healthy schools initiative parents were offered cookery workshops, which were well attended, and have supported the school in the healthy lunch box drive. Partnerships with external agencies, other schools in the Excellence in Cities cluster and community groups such as Plymouth Argyle Football Club are outstanding and support curriculum provision and the well-being of pupils. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Due to the school's geographical location, pupils have limited awareness of societies and cultures different from their own and the school has correctly identified this as an area for development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and experiences below those typical for their age. Before they start in the Nursery, mother and toddler sessions provide an effective introduction and help children to settle into the secure learning environment quickly and enjoy coming to school. These informal sessions help to build

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effective links with parents. Assessment is used well to track children's progress, there is an appropriate focus on developing social skills and children learn and play well together. The quality of teaching children receive is good. By the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children are in line with expectations for their age and have made good progress against their learning goals. They have gained in confidence, their behaviour is excellent and most have become independent learners. Resources are good and provide opportunities for children to develop a range of skills. Outdoor play provision is good and gives children the opportunity to take risks in a secure environment and develop their self-confidence in trying new things. Awareness of health and safety is an integral part of activities and reinforced regularly. Creativity is encouraged throughout the provision. Children in the Nursery 'bake a cake' to celebrate their birthdays and there are many other opportunities for them to experiment with cooking. A good emphasis is placed on developing early writing skills. It is evident in the Reception class that the recently introduced interventions are proving successful, particularly with more able children. For example, children in the Nursery were making mother's day cards selecting from an exciting range of materials. Older children were making laptop computers from cereal boxes and some were writing letters on their keyboard. Resources to support ICT are limited. The high quality pastoral care in the main school is extended to the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. Links with parents and carers are excellent, as they are with external support agencies. Both the Nursery and the Reception classes within the Early Years Foundation Stage are well managed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Although only a small percentage of families responded to the questionnaire the results were overwhelmingly positive in support of the school. Parents and carers felt their children were safe and enjoyed school. They were very happy with their children's experience at school. Comments made particular reference to the additional support provided by the school both to them and their children. They felt comfortable approaching the school if there were any issues. The only negative comment was in relation to the lack of consistency and stability in teaching in Year 1. Inspectors agreed with parents' views of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mount Wise Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 179 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	67	12	28	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	58	17	40	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	37	26	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	53	20	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	49	22	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	44	24	56	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	44	24	56	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	51	20	47	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	40	23	53	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	47	21	49	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	49	20	47	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	63	16	37	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mount Wise Community Primary School, Plymouth PL1 4LA

I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently and for talking to us about your school and work.

We found that the effectiveness of your school and the education you receive are satisfactory. You told us that you feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school. You particularly like going out on school trips and activities to help you develop healthy lifestyles such as the Fitkids Club at lunchtimes. We found your behaviour is excellent both in lessons and the playground. You work hard in your lessons. By the end of Year 6, you make satisfactory progress in your learning and, apart from English, attain standards in line with those expected for your age. Progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The partnerships the school has developed with the community and other agencies are excellent and extend and enrich your learning as well as contributing to the high quality care that you receive. Links with your parents or carers are outstanding.

We have identified some areas of the school's work that need improvement to make your school an even better place. These have already been recognised by senior leaders and the governing body and a start has been made to tackle some of them. These are the things that we have asked your school to do.

- Improve your progress and attainment in English, particularly in writing.
- Make sure that the quality of teaching is more carefully checked so that all of you receive high quality teaching and are given challenging targets to meet.
- Make sure that information about the progress you are making is used more effectively so that lessons are planned to meet your learning needs, particularly for those of you who find learning easy.
- Improve the attainment and progress of those of you in Years 1 and 2.

You are already playing your part by behaving well and working hard in lessons. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Goodchild

Lead Inspector

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