

# Mount Pleasant Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116092
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	338721
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Sinclair

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>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Brora
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Mount Pleasant Road Southampton SO14 0WZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 80223634
<b>Fax number</b>	023 8040020
<b>Email address</b>	head@mountpleasant.southampton.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and nine part-lessons, observing eight teachers and several teaching assistants. Inspectors also held meetings with governors, senior staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including policies, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. They considered the 23 responses from questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- attainment and rates of progress for all groups of pupils
- the extent to which teaching, the curriculum and pupils' involvement in their own learning have an impact on raising attainment and pupils' enjoyment
- the impact of overall leadership in embedding ambition and driving improvement in order to raise standards across the school
- the strategies the school has put in place to improve attendance and the success of these.

## Information about the school

Mount Pleasant is a junior school of average size. The greater proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, particularly Indian and Pakistani, and some of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. There is a broadly-average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are mainly moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than usual. Pupil mobility is high. Many of the new arrivals at the school are at the very early stages of learning English. The school has the ActiveMark Award.

The school and its staff have undergone a period of uncertainty since 2008, because of the possibility of amalgamation with the infant school. This has now been resolved. The acting headteacher, who took on the role in January 2009, became substantive headteacher in April 2010.

**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

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving well under the strong and supportive leadership of the headteacher who has successfully created an effective whole-school team, all of whom are committed to bringing about improvement. This is beginning to raise standards and accelerate pupils' rates of progress. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer and this is seen in their good attitudes to learning and positive behaviour in lessons.

The school has high mobility and a good number of pupils at an early stage of learning English and this affects attainment, which is low. However, the attainment of current Year 6 pupils who have been in the school since Year 3 is broadly average in English and mathematics. As with all pupils in the school, their progress has accelerated recently. This is due to the very robust systems the school has put in place to monitor the progress of all groups of pupils and to support those not making enough progress. Additionally, there have been improvements in science and writing as a result of greater use of investigations in science and more opportunities for writing across the curriculum, which has increased enjoyment. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although some good and outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers organise and manage lessons well so pupils work hard, find lessons fun and are attentive. Most involve pupils well in improving their work through marking, assessing how well they are doing, and knowledge of their targets. This has a good impact on learning. However, there are some inconsistencies, evident from pupils' books, which hamper overall progress. Also, occasionally slow pace, insufficient match of work to pupils' needs and lack of challenging questioning, particularly for high-attaining pupils, mean that pupils lose interest and do not make the progress of which they are capable.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides good links between subjects and interesting activities. The focus on healthy lifestyles has ensured that pupils are clear about the need for fruit and vegetables and plenty of exercise. They make a good contribution to the community through their work as school councillors and monitors and through work in the performing arts that they describe as the 'best thing'. Vulnerable pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English get effective support both within the school and from outside agencies, enabling their needs to be met well. Links with parents, although satisfactory, do not fully engage them in the school or their children's learning, particularly those who are only in the school for a short time. The school has worked very hard to improve attendance and most pupils attend regularly. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school carefully monitors the progress and success of initiatives. However, monitoring of teaching and learning, although regular is not sufficiently

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rigorous to quantify improvements over time. The school has an effective headteacher in place who has improved staff morale after a difficult period of uncertainty. There is a trend of improvement, particularly in attainment and progress, care of pupils and their behaviour. On the evidence of the progress made so far, the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment further by providing greater challenge in lessons through:
  - increasing the pace of lessons so that pupils are consistently challenged in their learning
  - better match of work and more effective questioning, particularly for higher-attaining pupils
  - embedding good practice so that residual inconsistencies are eliminated.
- Improve monitoring of teaching and learning through clearer criteria for evaluating its quality so that improvement can be monitored more closely. Involve senior leaders in the process.
- Engage parents more fully in their children's learning and canvas their support to promote good attendance.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Attainment has been low for several years but is improving. Progress is satisfactory and sometimes good due to better tracking and improved provision. Pupils say that learning is fun and this was obvious in a lesson where they were using treasure maps to learn about compass points. It helped that the teacher was dressed as a pirate. Pupils enjoy working collaboratively and this was evident in a mathematics lesson when they were working together on combinations of coins to make a set amount. In many lessons they make good gains in their use of subject-specific vocabulary. For example, in English they know and use vocabulary such as adjectives, connectives and dialogue. They are keen to talk about what they are doing and were animated as they described ways of improving the □Hodgeheg's' road safety skills. One pupil in this class also had the vocabulary written in his own language to help his understanding and ensure his full participation. His parents are delighted with how he has settled into school and the support he has been given. Pupils at an early stage of learning English enjoy small-group reading sessions where they discuss words such as □'nibbling' and have the opportunity to refer back to how it is spoken in their own language. Some older pupils know the levels that they are working at in English and mathematics and know what they have to do to get to the next level, for example □ □'write in paragraphs'. This has ensured a good involvement in what they need to do to improve as they are keen to

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raise their attainment.

Pupils feel safe in school and confident that any bullying will be dealt with effectively. They contribute well to the school community and to a healthy lifestyle through their involvement in growing their own vegetables which they then cook for a whole-school dinner. Pupils from different cultures work harmoniously together and are considerate of each other and polite and friendly towards adults. Sometimes, however, their enthusiasm for football outweighs their consideration of each other and they have disagreements. They have learnt that this has a price, as football now has to be monitored continuously by adults, which limits how often pupils can play.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching and assessment, although satisfactory overall, are improving. Much is new and has not become fully embedded so it has not fully impacted on progress, although this has been gradually accelerating over the last year. Teachers plan and execute lessons well and ensure all support staff are effectively deployed to support small groups. Very careful and rigorous tracking of pupils has enabled the school to quickly identify those

<sup>1</sup> 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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not making enough progress and put effective interventions in place to remedy this. Support staff are well used in this context. Pupils are taught in ability groups for literacy and numeracy and teachers work hard to match work to pupils' abilities. However, in spite of this, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged enough through questioning that encourages them to explain their thinking fully or work that ensures sufficient demands on their ability. Most teachers work hard to involve pupils in improving their work through encouraging them to respond to marking, assessing how well they have done in lessons and in working towards their targets. However, inconsistencies in teaching quality mean that not all implement this consistently, so not all pupils benefit. Additionally, in less effective lessons the pace is often slower so pupils lose interest and this slows progress. The curriculum is effective in providing pupils with interesting experiences that ensure continuity in their learning. Good enrichment through the use of music, sporting and dance specialists enables good progress in these areas. Effective links such as good opportunities for writing in geography and the use of graphs in science support the relevance of all subjects to pupils' learning. Good pastoral care, such as that of emotional literacy assistants and the community link worker, ensures vulnerable pupils and their families are well supported. The minority ethnic coordinator provides good support for those at an early stage of learning English, ensuring that they make good progress in developing their speaking skills. She has also helped to ensure that groups that have underperformed in the past, such as Pakistani and Indian pupils, get the support they need to increase their progress. Good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English through well-targeted interventions and small-group work ensure they achieve their specific targets.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and his senior staff have a clear vision for the school which they communicate well to staff. Subject leaders have implemented improvements to their subjects such as greater use of investigations in science and guided reading in English. This is raising standards and increasing pupil enjoyment. The very positive relationships that permeate the school, and the collegiate approach that has been engendered, ensure that all staff are supportive of new initiatives and keen to bring about improvement. The school has been well supported by the local authority in its drive for

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improvement and the resulting 'raising attainment plan' has helped the school to clearly focus on areas for improvement. However, although leadership has improved the quality of teaching so that it is at least satisfactory or better, it is still variable. Monitoring is not sufficiently clear about the criteria for an effective lesson, how improvements need to be made or ensuring these are followed up and this adversely affects its effectiveness as a tool for improvement.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, particularly with reference to safeguarding, and are supportive of the school. However, many governors are new and still developing their role in the school. They are not yet fully effective at holding the school to account for its actions.

The school is now monitoring progress of all groups carefully and takes action to support pupils who are falling behind. This, coupled with good attention to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, vulnerable pupils and those at an early stage of learning English, ensures a satisfactory and improving commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling any potential discrimination. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents. However, the community is diverse and somewhat transient and not all parents are fully involved in supporting their children's learning. Parents get adequate information about their children through newsletters, parent consultation evenings and some involvement in decisions affecting the school and their children. Good links with outside agencies such as the local authority music service, sports partnership and the cultural mediator make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and well-being. The school promotes community cohesion at the local level well. It has completed a full audit of its context, involving all its stakeholders, and evaluated its impact. It is fully aware of the need to improve links at the national level and with hard-to-reach groups within the community. Systems for safeguarding pupils are thorough and all policies and procedures are fully in place.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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



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<p><b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>

### Views of parents and carers

Very few questionnaires were returned, reflecting the views of only a minority of parents. However, of these parents, most are happy with the school and what it provides.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mount Pleasant Junior 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 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 227 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	39	14	61	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	57	9	39	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	43	13	57	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	57	9	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	39	14	61	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	43	10	43	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)	10	43	7	30	2	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	26	17	74	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	48	11	48	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	26	16	70	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	22	16	70	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	65	6	26	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



1 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mount Pleasant Junior School, Southampton SO14 0WZ

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed meeting the school council members and chatting to many of you during the inspection.

We judged that your school is giving you a satisfactory education, which means that it does some things well but some things need to be improved.

Here are some other things we particularly liked about your school.

- You are polite, friendly and keen to learn.
- Your headteacher and all the staff take good care of you and you in turn feel safe and well supported.
- You behave well and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy.

These are the things I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Ensure that work and teachers' questions always challenge you, particularly those of you who are more able, so that you make the best possible progress.
- Ensure school leaders focus very carefully on making your school even better by helping teachers to improve how well they teach you.
- Involve your parents more in your learning and in ensuring you attend school as often as possible.

You can help by working hard in school and making sure you attend regularly.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead inspector

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