

# Milton-on-Stour Church of England Primary School

Milton-on-Stour, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5QD

**Inspection dates** 4–5 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Attainment is above average in mathematics due to their good progress. Pupils make rapid progress in reading and writing. This helps pupils to attain high standards in these subjects by Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils supported by additional funding, achieve exceptionally well.
- Pupils are consistently well taught in all classes. Monitoring and support of teaching are very effective.
- Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Relationships with staff and between pupils are outstanding and pupils feel very safe and secure in school.
- The headteacher is an excellent leader and very ably supported by his deputy. Monitoring and development systems are very effective. They have driven forward improvement rapidly in the past two years. The school is very well placed to improve further.
- Governors' good knowledge of teaching quality and pupils' progress ensures the governors hold senior staff to account well. Their pursuit of value for money, for example in additional sports funding, is especially good.
- The school's engagement with parents is outstanding. They are very satisfied with the school's work and support their children's learning exceptionally well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as good as in reading and writing.
- The majority of teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Subject leaders and governors do not play an active enough part in leading improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, nine of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to group or individual activities. The inspector observed some extra-curricular activities, including those for physical education and sport, heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff including senior and middle managers. A conversation was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 46 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school.
- Responses from the 23 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

## Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Milton-on-Stour is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school in which most pupils are taught in mixed age classes. The numbers on roll have risen since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action is below the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is low. This funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to support looked after children.
- There has been a complete change of teaching staff since the previous inspection. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2011.
- Senior and subject leaders work closely with other local schools, most recently in supporting improvements in learning programmes for mathematics.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Build on the strategies in place to raise achievement through:
  - ensuring that all pupils have the opportunities to practise and refine new skills and ideas in mathematics before moving on to the next stage in their learning
  - capitalising more on younger pupils' excellent attitudes by encouraging these pupils to find things out for themselves
  - raising the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by sharing the best practice.
- Ensure that subject leaders and the governing body take a greater role in leading school improvement work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter Reception with skills mostly at the levels expected for this age, although lower in some early reading and writing skills. Children's good progress ensures a greater proportion of children than is seen nationally reach a good level of development by Year 1.
- There is excellent teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) in Reception and Year 1. This ensures results in the Year 1 phonics screening check are above average.
- Teaching in phonics is strong and there is excellent support for those pupils who find reading difficult. This means they make excellent progress in this subject. By Year 2, most pupils reach at least the levels expected for this age and attainment is above average.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress in reading. By Year 6, attainment in reading is high. By the time they leave, pupils are very skilled readers. For example, they easily understand the plot of a story from clues in the text.
- There has been a strong emphasis on improving writing over the last two years. As a result, pupils' achievement is now outstanding. The proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age in writing has improved exceptionally well.
- Pupils in Year 2 use interesting vocabulary to write well constructed stories. Year 6 pupils' writing in a wide range of genres is very effective. The quality of their poetry writing using metaphors and personification is excellent.
- The focus on mathematics this year has led to considerable improvement. This is especially evident in pupils' calculation skills, including in fractions. Achievement is securely good and rising rapidly.
- Younger pupils are skilled at carrying out calculations. However, they do not always fully understand what skills are required to complete the challenging tasks set for them. This impedes their progress.
- Pupils in Year 6 have an excellent understanding of different mathematical concepts. Virtually all pupils work very confidently with a wide range of data and measures. Their attainment is above average and rising rapidly. Although, in other year groups, attainment is rising less quickly.
- The school is strongly committed to providing equality of opportunity. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress. Virtually all reach the levels expected for their age by Year 6.
- Pupils eligible for support through additional funding also do very well. Their attainment and progress are similar to that of their peers in both English and mathematics.
- The most able pupils achieve well, consistently reaching higher attainment levels. In reading and writing, excellent progress has increased the proportion attaining higher levels. The improvement is slower in mathematics.
- The very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional, achieve as well as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching quality is uniformly at least good in all classes, despite staff changes, due to very strong monitoring and support systems.
- A key to the rapid improvement made over the last two years is the consistency of important aspects of teaching, such as behaviour management. This means any interruption to learning is extremely rare.
- Subject expertise in English has increased exceptionally well over the past two years, helping teaching and learning in reading and writing to improve.
- Teaching in mathematics has improved rapidly this year. In particular, staff have much higher

expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, Year 2 pupils are skilled at adding or subtracting with negative numbers when they have resources to help them.

- There are occasions, however, when staff move pupils on to the next stage of learning before they fully understand a mathematical concept. This is because pupils have had too few chances to consolidate and practise new skills. Teachers then have to go back and re-inforce these again, which slows progress.
- Pupils exhibit a great thirst for learning, which is capitalised on especially well in the older year groups. As a result, the quality of learning in Year 6 is excellent. In the younger year groups pupils are not always given opportunities in the same way.
- The consistent use of targets to help pupils improve and the quality of marking are very good. On most occasions, staff are very vigilant in checking how well pupils are doing during lessons.
- Very well trained teaching assistants support learning especially well, both in lessons and in small group or one-to-one activities. This is a major reason why pupils who are at risk of under achieving make such good progress.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps pupils to become very mature and thoughtful young people. Pupils' outstanding awareness of their rights and responsibilities helps prepare them exceptionally well for living in an increasingly diverse and global society.
- Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are very clear about what behaviour is acceptable in a wide range of situations. The behaviour of pupils who find consistently good behaviour difficult improves especially well over time due to the outstanding support they receive. These pupils are full of praise for the school's support.
- Pupils get on very well with staff and each other. This considerably supports learning because cooperative work in lessons and team work, including on the sports field, is excellent.
- Pupils develop a great enthusiasm for learning which supports their progress exceptionally well. Attendance levels are rigorously monitored, with especially good support provided for the very few poor attenders. As a result, attendance levels are high.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibility for monitoring their learning targets, responding eagerly to more challenging tasks to do even better. This is why progress has accelerated so well in the older classes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils' consideration of others means bullying in any form is extremely rare and always dealt with very successfully.
- Pupils are very aware of how to keep safe, including when using the internet. They look out for each other exceptionally well. An older pupil was excellent at helping younger pupils to play fairly in team games at the 'Energy Club'.
- The pupils have an outstanding awareness of the respect they should show for people from different backgrounds. This is very effectively supported through links with schools in Bristol and Sudan. This is an important factor in the school's successful discouragement of discrimination.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher drives forward improvement especially well, with very strong support from his deputy.
- Subject leadership has strongly benefited from this, particularly in mathematics. As a result, the new leader helped progress accelerate especially well this year. She has also played a key role in helping develop mathematics in local schools. Other subject leaders are not yet as skilled.
- Leadership of support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is excellent.

Staff receive exceptionally good training in this aspect.

- Systems for checking and improving the school's work have improved considerably since the previous inspection and provide a very clear picture of how well the school is doing. This helps ensure development planning very effectively targets weaker aspects to enable them improve quickly.
- School leaders very successfully help new staff and governors to play an effective part in supporting improvement work. But, as yet, they do not play a full part in identifying and leading school improvement issues.
- Support for teacher performance is very rigorous and effective, especially so for new staff. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide excellent guidance, especially for staff at the beginning of their teaching careers.
- Comprehensive records help ensure the governing body is well informed about teaching quality, enabling governors to award salary increases only for good performance.
- The curriculum has improved very well this year, with practical activities enhancing learning. Programmes for English are especially effective. Those for mathematics have also improved, although the full effect of this on pupils' progress is not yet evident. Special activities to help pupils who are falling behind to catch up are excellent.
- Outstanding programmes for pupils' personal, social and health education promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development especially well. Spiritual awareness is exceptionally well fostered through links with the local church.
- Safeguarding fully meets requirements. All policies and procedures are fully up to date and rigorously followed. Both staff and governors receive appropriate training.
- The school's excellent partnership with parents helps the latter to work exceptionally well with staff in supporting their children's learning, for example through hearing reading.
- The local authority supported the school well to turn things around when attainment declined in previous years. It provided especially good training in mathematics subject leadership. As a result, Milton is now a 'light touch' school and it welcomes the monitoring carried out.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They are very well informed about pupils' achievement and monitor this well. Re-organised committees have raised governors' effectiveness, especially in holding staff to account for the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Governors have always been supportive but now are beginning to gain confidence in driving forward improvement, having previously been very reliant on senior staff to do this. The pursuit of value for money is especially effective. As a result, the additional funding to raise pupils' achievement is used exceptionally well by providing high quality resources and support. Equally, the funding for physical education and sport is used to exceptionally good effect. The increased teacher expertise and opportunities for competitive sport have greatly increased participation and success in competitions. Previously reluctant pupils benefit from attending the 'Energy Club'.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113891
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	439570

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

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	132
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Melvin Stroud
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Barge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01747 822588
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