



Two Mile Ash School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110525
LEA Milton Keynes LEA
Inspection number 278452
Inspection dates 16 January 2006 to 17 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Thompson AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	The High Street
School category	Foundation		Two Mile Ash
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Milton Keynes MK8 8LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01908 562262
Number on roll	616	Fax number	01908 263735
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs M Hubbard
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Miss A Curtis

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Two Mile Ash is a large, newly constituted Junior School. Prior to September 2005 it was a Middle School for pupils aged eight to 12. In September 2005 it admitted pupils in Year 3 for the first time, in addition to its usual intake of Year 4 pupils. These two new year groups comprise about 300 pupils, which is about half of the number on roll, and are drawn from about 30 infant and first schools. Most pupils are of white British heritage. Their home circumstances are generally more advantaged than those of pupils in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The previous headteacher left the school in April 2005, and an interim headteacher is in place until a newly appointed headteacher takes charge in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. This is an outstanding school that gives very good value for money. The parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their views are fully justified. The quality of education, including teaching, is outstanding. As a result, the pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the time they leave. Those pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities also make excellent progress. This happens because their individual needs are quickly identified and met. The curriculum is exceptionally well planned and provides a wide variety of activities which interest and excite the pupils. However, the school recognises that it needs to provide more opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. Teachers know them extremely well and are exceptionally good at using what they know to ensure that pupils make rapid gains in their learning. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are exceptionally well cared for and therefore feel secure and happy. The leadership of the interim headteacher is of the highest quality. A highly committed staff team and the governing body give her excellent support. Together, they have developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have devised a very clear plan for the further development of the school. Teachers manage their areas of responsibility exceptionally well. The school has made good progress since opening as a Junior School. There is a strong commitment to improvement at all levels within the school, leaving it well placed to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupil's attainment on entry to the school is average. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have not yet had the opportunity to fully benefit from the outstanding teaching as they have only just joined the school. Nevertheless they have achieved well in their first term and have made rapid progress, particularly in developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Those in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress. The school's overall performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 is consistently above the national average. The school is working successfully to raise attainment in writing further, even though almost nine in every ten pupils achieve the nationally expected level in English, and over three in ten performed at a high level. It is doing this because it has rightly judged its performance in English to be relatively weak in comparison to that in mathematics or science. Focused teaching and increased resources are proving successful and evidence points to even better results in 2006. As a result of very effective, focused support, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are gifted and talented achieve exceptionally well, and meet their challenging

targets. Those pupils learning English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school very much. Their attendance is very good and their contribution to the life of the school is outstanding. They have very high expectations of their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. As a result, they not only behave well in lessons and around the school but are always looking for ways to do even better. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and are confident that adults or older pupils who act as 'leaders' in the school can help them solve any difficulties they are experiencing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, enabling them to make a very positive contribution to the school and wider community. They are proud to take on extra responsibilities in the school and to help others. For example, they raised money to support a local doctor to set up a hospital in an area affected by the Tsunami. The 'leaders' and the elected school council make thoughtful contributions to the running of the school. Pupils understand that it is important to stay safe and have a healthy lifestyle. The high priority the school places on valuing and developing each pupil as an individual means that confidence, independence and maturity are hallmarks of the pupils' success. As a result, they thrive. They are very well prepared for the next phase of their education and for their future economic wellbeing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high standards and expectations which encourage good behaviour and contribute to the purposeful atmosphere which pervades the school. Lessons are extremely well planned. They include a variety of different activities or challenges which cater well for pupils' different abilities and ways of learning. Teachers skilfully anticipate areas pupils may find more difficult or confusing and plan how to overcome these. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about learning and make very good progress. Pupils also benefit from high quality specialist teaching in subjects such as French and physical education. Teachers use resources well to capture pupils' interest. They make very good links between what pupils have learned in one lesson or subject to learn in different subjects. However, in some lessons, opportunities are missed for pupils to use ICT to extend what they know and what they can do. Teachers develop pupils' independence and encourage them to reflect thoughtfully on their progress. One of the ways they do this is by involving pupils in setting their own targets and evaluating their efforts in meeting them. They also involve pupils in assessing their own work and progress by highlighting where they have used exceptional vocabulary in their written work. Throughout the school, teachers monitor pupils' progress thoroughly. They quickly identify potential learning difficulties and plan well to overcome them.

Very skilful specialist teachers and teaching assistants provide outstanding additional support for pupils who find learning more difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It has been modified successfully to respond to recent changes of age groups within the school. Across all year groups, a particularly strong feature is the way in which activities are planned. This is the result of very good team work among staff and gives excellent attention to developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. A wide range of visits and visitors enhance the curriculum, and an excellent range of out of school activities encourages pupils to extend their knowledge. There is an excellent programme of personal and social education, including a strong emphasis on drugs, sex and relationships education. The specific needs of pupils are addressed very well, based on the shared philosophy that every child matters. Individual education plans ensure outstanding provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils who are identified as gifted and talented are given many opportunities to fulfil their potential. These include after-school sessions at the 'Children's University', held at a local technology college. The needs of pupils who learn English as an additional language are planned well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of the care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for and trust the school to let them know if there are any emerging problems. The procedures governing the safety and protection of pupils are comprehensive and applied sensitively. Risk assessments are of a high standard and used very effectively to maintain a healthy and safe environment for pupils and staff. Pupils trust their teachers to help them if they are unhappy or worried about their work. They say that their targets and marking often help them to improve their work and motivate them to try harder. Good records are kept to monitor their progress and to help teachers to identify individual strengths and weaknesses in order to provide appropriate support and challenge. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive high quality help and make excellent progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is successfully managing the change in its leadership. The interim headteacher provides outstanding direction. She has skilfully continued to improve the school and, at the same time, retained core values. She is supported very well by the senior management team. Together, they show a strong determination to ensure that all pupils are fully included and reach their potential. The senior managers know the school very well and make very good use of information gathered through their regular monitoring to guide its development. They have ensured that the curriculum

contains a wide variety of activities so that all pupils can find something in which they can be successful. Their evaluations of the impact of their work are thorough and accurate, and used well to set challenging targets. The excellent partnership between the school and parents is an important factor in the good progress made by pupils. Staff have high expectations of what can be achieved, and these are consistently realised. There are well focused training opportunities which challenge and extend the staff's professional expertise and contribute to high expectations of performance. Governance is outstanding. The governing body has managed the change in headship particularly well, and show rigour and clear vision. Governors carefully monitor the work of the school and are good at holding it to account. They provide high quality support for school initiatives and ensure that it meets its legal responsibilities.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following the inspectors' visit to your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * you achieve good standards * your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave exceptionally well and get on really well with each other * you learn a lot in lessons and make good progress because the teaching you receive is excellent* the school is very good at organising lots of interesting things for you to do* all of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after * your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are exceptionally good at making sure that you get the very best educationWe agree with your parents that you go to an outstanding school.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this we think that the most important thing to do next is to make sure that you have more opportunities to use computers or other ICT equipment to help you learn in all subjects.