



# May Park Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109131  
**Local Authority** Bristol, City of  
**Inspection number** 288290  
**Inspection dates** 21–22 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Hancock

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 address</b>	Coombe Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Eastville
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Bristol BS5 6LE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030075
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	420	<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9030092
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Richard Merrell
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Schwarz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	21–22 November 2006	288290

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by a team of three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a large inner-city school in which there is some economic and social hardship. The number of pupils who join or leave at other than the usual times is much higher than average. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high and has increased since the last inspection.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. It has successfully placed itself at the heart of the local community and parents are very pleased with the school. One parent wrote, 'I like the way May Park embraces the many cultures that make it such a happy school.' The school is particularly successful in ensuring that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and pastoral care is outstanding.

In recent times, standards have declined, partly owing to very high staff turnover involving long-term absences and the large numbers of pupils being admitted or leaving the school at various times in the year. Standards are below average by Year 6 but are improving because of new initiatives, although the tracking of achievement is inconsistent. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall because when they enter the school, children's levels of skills are very low, particularly in communication, language and number work. Good teaching helps the children in the Foundation Stage to achieve well, particularly in their personal and social development. Despite making up some ground, standards are well below national expectations by the time they begin Year 1.

Teaching is satisfactory; there is some good teaching, especially in the Foundation Stage, but there is too much variation across the school. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils but not enough is done to match the work to the different abilities within classes. Consequently the pace of learning is too slow. Teachers' expectations of rates of progress are not consistently high enough. Pupils with limited spoken English are supported well and quickly improve their speaking skills.

The satisfactory curriculum and the good level of care, support and guidance ensure that pupils develop into mature and sensible young people who have a good grasp of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils enjoy school and have confidence in their teachers and other adults. Attendance has gradually improved thanks to the school's effective programme, but it is still well below the national average, and unauthorised absences are high. This has a negative impact on the learning of the pupils involved.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is passionate about the school and rightly acknowledges that more needs to be done to improve achievement and teaching. The new leadership team are working effectively to break down barriers between home and school, ensuring parents take a more active part in their children's education. Governors are beginning to take a more proactive role in the management of the school and are becoming more accountable for the standards pupils attain. Many good foundations have been laid in the last year and the school is now in a much better position to develop and move forward.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, speaking and listening to improve pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science.

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that lessons provide sufficient challenge and support to match the needs of all pupils.
- Increase the rates of attendance across the school to improve achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Many children start school with very limited skills in all areas of learning, particularly in early number and communication and language skills. All children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, although by the end of the Reception year, standards are well below nationally expected levels.

By the end of Year 6, standards are below average but are improving. This is evident in the good progress being made in writing and significant improvement in mathematics achievement by the end of Year 6. However, progress is hampered in some lessons, particularly in mathematics, where the work is not well enough matched to pupils' ability levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with limited spoken English make steady progress because of the carefully planned programmes of work tailored to their needs.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

'Coming to school is the best thing because you get to learn, play and have lunch with friends,' was a comment made by a pupil in Year 6. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They feel safe and think that the school's anti-bullying policy works well. Most pupils behave well, are keen to learn and enjoy school, particularly the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered to them. Young children in the Foundation Stage soon settle into the routines and there are many good opportunities for them to develop their personal, social and emotional skills well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A wonderful spiritual moment was observed in the Reception class when a child from a special school joined the children for his weekly visit. Pupils and their families are often keen to share their cultural heritage, and this impacts well on pupils' learning. Pupils have a clear understanding of healthy lifestyles. In spite of the school's efforts to improve, attendance is still too low and this is having a negative impact on these pupils' learning.

The pupils efficiently organise and run a School Council and take its responsibilities extremely seriously. They spend money raised by pupils wisely, including new equipment and developing quiet areas for the playground. Other responsibilities undertaken include acting as peer mediators, helping pupils to prepare soundly for life outside school. Many pupils are involved in a number of community events such as the annual festival in St Paul's and fundraising activities to support people less fortunate than themselves.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and a wide range of activities ensures that children have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge across all areas of learning in a rich learning environment. In the rest of the school, teaching is satisfactory, with some elements of good teaching. There are clear learning objectives set for lessons and success criteria help to ensure that pupils make progress. However, there is a lack of consistency in matching the work to the needs of the pupils, which results in some pupils struggling without support whilst others are not receiving enough challenge. Learning support assistants are well trained and provide good support, particularly for pupils in the early stages of learning spoken English.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, with nursery provision being a particular strength. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a good balance of adult-led, child-initiated and play-based learning. As a result, children achieve well.

In the rest of the school the curriculum is broad and enhanced through activities such as the introduction of French for older pupils. Provision is also made for pupils who have English as an additional language by bi-lingual teaching assistants. This enables them to participate satisfactorily in all aspects of the curriculum. The school has recently reviewed its curriculum, particularly in Years 1 and 2 to improve standards in English and mathematics. More opportunities are now provided to develop communication and language skills and a new reading scheme has been introduced to improve pupils' confidence. However, it is too early to evaluate the full impact of these initiatives. Planning, particularly in mathematics, is not well enough focused on what pupils have already learnt, hence the slowing of progress in some lessons. The lack of space in school has a negative impact on the curriculum. Despite this, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities that benefit pupils' learning.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. The pastoral care, support and guidance provided for the pupils are outstanding. All child protection, risk assessments and other procedures are fully in place. The school has a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme, supported by a range of small-group work, which develops pupils' social and emotional skills well.

All support staff play important roles in supporting pupils for whom English is not their first language. The school has good links with many outside agencies that support pupils' learning well. The learning mentor makes an extremely effective contribution to pupils with significant social and emotional needs and her work is much appreciated by parents and carers.

The tracking of pupils' progress is developing well. Data is being used to set targets and, although in the early stages in mathematics and science, has been particularly successful in raising standards in writing. Older pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in relation to National Curriculum targets. They also know what they are aiming to achieve by the end of Year 6.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher has a clear understanding of what is needed to improve standards and achievement. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the new management team. There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school. There have been some successful recent improvements to track pupils' achievement in writing which have a positive impact on pupils' progress, though similar tracking in mathematics and science is at an early stage. Many strategies have been introduced to strengthen the ethos of the school as it develops as a harmonious multicultural community. Work to improve behaviour has been particularly successful and has had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and enjoyment of school. The headteacher has significantly strengthened communication with parents and is developing an effective partnership with them so that they are more able to support their children's education. There is still not enough consistency in setting work that has appropriate challenge for pupils of different abilities.

The very cramped building conditions allow very few opportunities for work outside the classroom, except to the corridor, where many are easily distracted by movement and noise. In the past the school has found difficulty recruiting governors but there are now many new governors who represent the whole- school community. Governors are developing better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are supporting the headteacher to improve standards.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

Thank you for helping us feel welcome in your school, for answering questions and sharing your work with us. We especially enjoyed chatting with many of you at the School Council and seeing your allotment area.

What we liked most about May Park Primary School:

- You are given a satisfactory education.
- You are kind and thoughtful, behave well and show good respect for others.
- You enjoy school and know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.
- You are an important part of the local community and enjoy taking part in the local carnival.
- Your headteacher and other adults take good care of you.
- Younger children get a good start in the Nursery.

These are the main areas where your school can improve:

- Help you do better in English, mathematics and science.
- All teachers need to plan interesting lessons and make sure the work you have is right for you and not too easy or too hard.
- Make sure all children come to school regularly and arrive on time.
- Use information in mathematics and science more effectively to help you improve your work.

We hope you will carry on helping your teachers and the adults in the school. You can help them by continuing to work hard and enjoy school. We certainly enjoyed visiting your school and meeting you all.