

Millway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122086
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380398
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Angela Kirk

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Adams
Headteacher	Paul Sentance
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Kirk
Christopher Parker
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Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 22 lessons taught by 14 teachers, together with a number of shorter observations. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and a representative of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils read and scrutinised pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information and teachers' planning. They also analysed questionnaires from staff and pupils, as well as 141 received from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Millway is a larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average as is the percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds with about 15% of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. A pre-school, which is not managed by the governing body, is on site and is subject to a separate inspection. The school holds Healthy Schools Status, the Bronze Eco-school Award and the intermediate level International Award. It has been subject to reorganisation and has only had pupils in Year 6 since the 2009/2010 academic year. Since the previous inspection the school has increased in size by over 50%.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils’ achievement is satisfactory, but improving. The school is not good because progress slows down during Key Stages 1 and 2. There is not enough good or better teaching in Years 1 to 6 to ensure that progress overall is better than satisfactory.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils’ attainment is average. Progress is accelerating, but from Year 1 onwards, progress in English is better than in mathematics partly because pupils receive better feedback on how to improve in English and partly because teachers do not challenge all groups of pupils as well in mathematics as they do in English.
- Teaching is satisfactory, but is improving and has a number of strengths. For example, teachers use ‘talk partners’ well to encourage pupils to explain their ideas and develop their thinking. In a number of other respects, there is too much inconsistency, such as when teachers do not check sufficiently well that new learning is being understood.
- Pupils feel safe in school and behaviour is good, characterised by pupils’ respect, care, politeness and thoughtfulness towards adults and each other. Attendance is high.
- Leaders and managers continue to make the right improvements to the school to keep it moving forward. Leadership is distributed across a wide range of senior and middle leaders, who are particularly committed to raising achievement and to improving teaching. Senior staff are analysing data, but not using this information sufficiently effectively to evaluate any differing achievement between some groups of pupils. As a result, information provided to the governing body does not always highlight shortcomings in the school’s performance.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise attainment to above average by July 2013 and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics from Year 1 onwards, by:
 - providing appropriately challenging tasks for all pupils in lessons, especially the more-able
 - making sure that the good marking in English, which informs pupils of the next steps in learning as well as their achievements, is better embedded in mathematics
 - reducing the amount of time that teachers talk so that pupils have more opportunities to learn actively
 - using teaching assistants more flexibly, especially during the main teaching session
 - ensuring current good practice in teaching is shared.
- Increase the consistency and effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - making more use of the data the school collects to target improvements, including the evaluation of those initiatives designed to raise achievement and using a more strategic method to compare the achievement of groups of pupils
 - ensuring that when monitoring the quality of teaching there is a sharper focus on the impact teachers have on pupils' learning
 - developing the role of the governing body so that accurate evaluation enables them to support and challenge the school on the impact of the school improvement activities.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 make satisfactory progress. Pupils enjoy school, especially some of the more practical aspects of the school's curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils were well motivated and able to work independently to review videos, leaflets and a range of information on the internet to establish why Llandudno might be an ideal holiday resort. Across the school, there is no significant difference in the achievement of any group of pupils, for example pupils from minority ethnic groups, and the school has closed a previous gender gap in English for one particular year group. More-able pupils are not always sufficiently well challenged in all parts of mathematics lessons in order to make the best progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because teachers are careful to give them work at the right level and because precise tracking of individual pupils ensures that interventions for any pupils who fall behind are successful. In the inspection survey, parents and carers said unanimously that their child is making good progress. Inspectors' findings show that progress has accelerated, but as a result of previous inconsistencies in progress from one year to the next, progress over time is still only satisfactory. Historically pupils made less progress in writing, but as a result of recent initiatives writing has now improved, but progress in mathematics is now lagging behind that in English. By the end of Year 1, pupils' reading skills are above average because of the good teaching

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of linking sounds and letters (phonics) in the Early Years Foundation Stage, guided reading and the carefully targeted use of interventions with those who require additional support to accelerate their reading. Reading standards by the time pupils leave the school are average and improving. The older pupils in the school did not benefit from the high focus on phonics to accelerate progress that younger ones are now enjoying. Reading, writing and information and communication technology are better developed across other curricular subjects than mathematics.

From levels of knowledge and skills on entry that are typical for their age, all groups of pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Achievement here is good because teaching moves at a high pace, there is effective challenge for all children and questioning is used well to aid children's understanding about what they are learning. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is now above average.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have worked successfully to improve the quality of their teaching and to embed new initiatives, especially in the past 18 months. In the best lessons, there is challenge for pupils of all abilities. However, the good practice in the school has not been shared sufficiently well and in the less successful lessons, specific challenge, particularly for the most able, is not always explicit, especially in mathematics. Teaching assistants are not always used to best effect; for example, during the main teaching session they sometimes have few opportunities to engage with pupils or take part in teaching a small group. Furthermore, in some lessons, pupils spend too long listening to the teacher, without the teacher engaging pupils actively.

The best teaching ensures that all pupils know exactly what the criteria are for success. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson pupils were challenged in groups to outline a plan for a formal letter to book a family holiday. Later in the lesson, they each had to work individually to plan a different formal letter. As they had benefited from the discussions within their group, as well as an initial whole class session, they were very confident in their inclusion of all the key features required. Cross-curricular planning ensures that pupils' skills are developed in themes which cover a number of subjects. For example, in a lesson in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils were able independently to log onto their computer and use a painting programme to produce a good quality picture. In a Year 4 lesson, the idea of writing a 'dilemma story' was linked well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the use of moral problems for pupils to consider. During discussion of a number of scenarios, pupils exhibited high moral standards.

As a result of effective professional development for teachers, assessment is now more accurate, especially at the end of Key Stage 1, and the school is now beginning to moderate its assessments from more year groups, with other schools. A scrutiny of pupils' work revealed effective marking in English that showed pupils how to improve their work, but this was not used equally well by all teachers in mathematics. Parents and carers agreed unanimously that their children were taught well. Inspectors found that well over half of the teaching in the school was good but

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that teaching is satisfactory overall.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

With a few exceptions, parents and carers are highly satisfied with standards of behaviour and safety at the school. The few concerns parents and carers had were around some rough behaviour at lunchtime, which they felt required further improvement. Inspectors found that pupils are typically well behaved both in lessons and as they move around school, although there are occasional lapses by a very small minority of pupils. Inspectors noted that as a result of the growing number of pupils, space is now more limited for pupils during morning playtime and when queuing and eating their lunch. The school agreed that some reorganisation would enable pupils to have more space to play and move around, promoting even better behaviour. Records indicate that the school has high expectations for the behaviour of all pupils and any incidents are quickly identified and successfully addressed. In the survey and in discussions with inspectors, pupils said they felt safe. They were keen to explain that they 'enjoy everything about their school and would not change anything'. Bullying is rare. All behaviour that is inappropriate is recorded and potential bullying situations are monitored carefully by the headteacher and other staff. The school takes active steps to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, through lessons about the dangers of the internet and to make them aware that bullying can take different forms through targeting pupils' race, religion or disability.

Attendance is high, and reflects not only pupils' enthusiasm for school, but also the high importance the school places on tackling any poor attendance through direct engagement and discussions with parents and carers.

Leadership and management

All leaders and managers share a commitment to improving achievement, teaching, behaviour and safety. Recent initiatives have improved pupils' writing and ensured the accuracy of teachers' assessment in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Furthermore, the gender gap in both reading and writing for younger pupils has been narrowed, supporting a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. A number of leaders and managers have a very effective understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their individual subjects or areas. However, whole-school self-evaluation is too generous. It does not make enough use of all leaders' analyses of data about pupils' achievement in evaluating initiatives. Some leaders are not focused sharply enough on the impact teachers have on pupils' learning when observing lessons.

The curriculum is broad and well-balanced, offering pupils interesting and enjoyable activities. It is enriched well through a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Its promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, particularly pupils' cultural development through opportunities in art and music. The school collects a wide range of data relating to pupils' achievements, but evaluations

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are not always sufficiently detailed, for example, to enable the school to have a strategic overview of the performance of all groups of pupils (although the focus on each individual pupil is good). Recent improvements in the organisation of the governing body have meant more members of the governing body now take an active role in meetings and are more willing to challenge the school. Effective school monitoring visits have now begun, but the governing body still does not always have information which enables it to have an accurate view about some of the weaknesses in the school.

All the requirements for safeguarding are met. There is a commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity, reflected most clearly in the sensitive care and management of all pupils. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Relationships with parents and carers are extremely positive because all staff, led by the headteacher, put each individual pupil's learning and well-being at the forefront of their priorities. One respondent to the questionnaire exemplified the views of many parents and carers: 'Millway's teachers have consistently impressed us with the care and attention they provide to ensure my son's individual education goals are fun, achievable and involve us as his parents.'

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Millway Primary School, Northampton, NN5 6ES

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited you recently. You told us that you really enjoy everything about school and feel safe there. We were pleased that bullying is rare in your school and that you have a very clear sense of what is morally right and wrong. We were impressed also by your high attendance – well done. Your behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground. In the survey and in discussions with inspectors, you said you feel safe and were also keen to explain to us that you 'enjoy everything about your school and would not change anything'.

Millway is a satisfactory school, where you reach average levels of attainment and make satisfactory progress. The youngest children make a good start in Reception. Overall you achieve better in English than you do in mathematics. Recently, the progress that you have been making has really accelerated. To improve your school further, we have asked your teachers to help you make even more progress, particularly in mathematics. The focus will be on improving lessons, so that each one of you has work at just the right level, especially if you find learning easy. We have also asked the school to make sure that you do not sit and listen to your teachers for too long before becoming involved in a short activity, for example, by doing some work on your whiteboards on something that you have just start to learn. In your English, the teachers are very good at explaining where you have achieved well and what you need to do to improve. We have asked them to provide you with more useful comments like these in mathematics. Senior teachers and the governing body are going to be monitoring the school's progress very closely, to make sure that their good ideas for improving the school are working well.

You can help too, by trying especially hard in mathematics and by keeping up your good behaviour and your high attendance.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk
Lead inspector

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