

Millom Infants' School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 112159 |
| Local Authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 357054 |
| Inspection dates | 31 January 2011–1 February 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Brian Dower |

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 | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 79 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Anthony Gilmore |
| Headteacher | Mrs Pauline Webster |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 October 2007 |
| School address | Lapstone Road Millom Cumbria LA18 4LP |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited five lessons and observed the work of five teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including policies, curriculum and lesson plans, minutes of the governing body's meetings, development plans and assessment records of pupils' progress. Twenty five questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed, together with 17 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the boys are progressing in reading and writing.
- The effectiveness of the use assessments to support learning and to provide suitably challenging and enjoyable learning activities.
- How much impact the nurture group has in meeting the needs of potentially vulnerable pupils.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority-ethnic backgrounds. It has a number of awards, including the Activemark and Forest School status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is a good school. Attainment is average and improving rapidly, and pupils' learning and the progress they make in relation to their below average starting points are good. They enjoy school and achieve well.

Aspects of the school's work are outstanding. Potentially vulnerable pupils make excellent progress in their personal development, enabling them to make the same good academic progress as others. The high quality of provision and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has resulted in rapid improvements in children's progress, with some children reaching above-average standards in aspects of their development. The care and support all pupils receive are exceptional.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. They eat healthy lunches and take plenty of exercise. Older pupils help to care for the younger children and have worked with the staff in formulating school rules and the rewards system. Pupils are actively involved in local community events, such as the flower festival and the scarecrow competition and they show their concern for others through fund-raising for charity. Pupils are sensitive to the feelings of others and are aware that there are people in society from different backgrounds than themselves. For their age, their awareness of diversity is good. They know right from wrong and have a sense of fair play. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

The school's evaluation of how well it is doing is very accurate and based on rigorous monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress. The very effective leadership of the senior management team has led to significant improvement in the vast majority of outcomes and provision since the last inspection. Because of the much improved quality of teaching and learning, which is good, there has been a considerable rise in attainment, particularly in writing and in mathematics. The rate of improvement in pupils' reading skills has been slower, despite the school's introduction of strategies to enhance these skills. Other noted improvements have been in significantly enhanced provision for Reception children and in establishing excellent links with external agencies and services to support pupils' learning. In addition, the momentum of change has been consistently maintained during a period of staffing difficulties. These aspects all demonstrate the school's excellent capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in reading as quickly as in writing and mathematics by:
 - extending opportunities for pupils to apply their reading skills across the
 - curriculum

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- making greater use of information and communication technology to enable pupils to access a wide range of texts and reading programmes
- involving parents and carers more in supporting their children's reading at home.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the Reception Year with skills and knowledge generally below those expected for their age. Attainment in writing and mathematics has improved significantly over recent months for all groups, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those few from minority-ethnic backgrounds. Boys and girls are now working securely at nationally expected levels in writing and are exceeding those in mathematics. Improvements in pupils' reading skills have not been as rapid but attainment is rising.

Pupils talk enthusiastically and confidently about their work and the extra-curricular activities in which they are involved. They behave well and are supportive and considerate of each other. This is evident in their collaborative working in group activities. Pupils' attendance is average and improving fast, and punctuality is good. In lessons, many instances were seen of independent learning, testimony to pupils' growing self-reliance and their ability to sustain concentration for extended periods. Pupils' preparation for the future is good because of their rapidly rising attainment in writing and mathematics, their well-developed independent learning skills and their evident ability to get on well together.

Although their overall progress is good, potentially vulnerable pupils make outstanding progress in their emotional and social development, enabling them to work harmoniously and productively with their peers. When given the opportunity, pupils use their information and communication technology skills well, for example, when researching information on wildlife in a Year 2 lesson and using a mathematical programme on symmetry and shape in a Year 1 lesson. Opportunities for using such technology to extend pupils' reading skills are less well developed.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils and work successfully to remove any barriers to learning. They make good use of accurate assessments to set suitably challenging and enjoyable learning activities for all groups. Higher attaining Year 1 pupils' analytical and descriptive abilities were challenged when they had to identify and describe complex number patterns. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to talk at length about their work. Pupils, who in the past lacked self-esteem, were observed giving short presentations to the whole class about their learning. The excellent teaching and support provided in the nurture group has given such pupils confidence in themselves and the belief that they can do well. The very high level of concern and care is evident throughout the school, giving all pupils the security and sense of well-being they need to make good progress.

Overall, curricular provision is appropriately balanced in providing for the development of pupils' basic skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Opportunities are still being missed, however, to encourage pupils to apply their reading skills widely across subjects. The Forest School initiative is making a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of the natural environment and its conservation. The well-attended wide range of extra-curricular activities adds to pupils' enjoyment of school and their sense of self-worth.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher during a period of staffing difficulties laid the foundations for the drive for improvement and the rise in attainment. The work of the nurture group and of the Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally well led. Staff are very ambitious for the school's success and work effectively as a team, providing varied and interesting learning activities for all groups. The school is a cohesive and harmonious working community. The positive impact it has made on community cohesion is evident in its work with families. This has brought the closer involvement of parents and carers in supporting their children's education. However, the school acknowledges that it could do more to involve parents and carers in supporting their child's reading at home. Excellent links with other providers and services underpins the outstanding progress made by potentially vulnerable pupils. The progress they and other groups make testify to the school's excellent promotion of equality of opportunity for every boy and girl.

Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective and safe working is seen in daily routines. The governing body knows the school well; it monitors performance closely and adeptly balances challenge with encouragement and support. Appropriate development plans have been devised to take the school forward, with the improvement of pupils' reading skills accorded priority. The school gives good value for money.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start school, children's skills vary, but overall they are below that expected for their age. This is particularly apparent in their language development, which is much lower than expected. They settle quickly and are soon happy and secure. They make good progress and achieve well, particularly in their physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, where attainment by the start of Year 1 is a little above average. Children's language development improves and, by the start of Year 1, they are close to expected levels in this skill. Potentially vulnerable children make excellent progress in their emotional and social development, learning how to share and play with others. There have been significant improvements in provision over the last two years because of the excellent leadership of the Reception Year. The indoor and outdoor learning environment is stimulating and provides extensive opportunities for children to make their own choices and find out things for themselves. Concern for safety and well-being are evident in all daily routines. The monitoring and recording of progress is very rigorous and provides highly-accurate assessments to inform planning. Excellent liaison with parents and carers ensures consistency in the way all adults support children's development.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

About one third of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. All were supportive of what the school is doing to care for their children and promote their education.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Millom Infants' 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 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 18 | 72 | 7 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 15 | 60 | 9 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 14 | 56 | 11 | 44 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 15 | 60 | 10 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 12 | 48 | 12 | 48 | 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) | 12 | 48 | 12 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 15 | 60 | 9 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 10 | 40 | 15 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 8 | 32 | 17 | 68 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 13 | 52 | 12 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 17 | 68 | 8 | 32 | 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 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 | 59 | 35 | 3 | 3 |
| Primary schools | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 13 | 36 | 41 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 39 | 43 | 3 |
| Special schools | 35 | 43 | 17 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 21 | 42 | 29 | 9 |
| All schools | 13 | 43 | 37 | 8 |

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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



2 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Millom Infants' School, Millom, LA18 4LP

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school. You go to a good school. You told us how you all get on so well together and you also said how much you like your teachers and the other adults who help you. What we had to do was find all the things which are really good about your school and if there is anything that could be improved. This is what we found out.

- Children in the Reception Year have a really good start to their learning.
- You all work hard and behave well.
- You are doing really well in your writing and mathematics.
- You do lots of good work.
- There are some pupils who are shy when they start school, but they soon join in with others.
- The adults give you lots of care and support.
- There are clubs and visits out of school which you enjoy.
- You raise money for charity which shows how much you care for others.

Your reading is improving but could be better and we have asked the teachers to give you more help with this, by giving you more opportunities to use information and communication technology to read more in lots of subjects and for your parents and carers to help you more with your reading at home.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Dower

Lead inspector

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