

Millfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120838
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358854
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Peter Thompson

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	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alex Robinson
Headteacher	Jan Harazdiuk
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 18 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Inspectors held meetings and discussions with groups of pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body and the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a representative sample of pupils' work, some policy documents and school reports. They scrutinised questionnaires returned by 157 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 25 staff.

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

- Actions taken to accelerate the attainment and progress of middle and higher achievers.
- Action taken to improve reading and writing, particularly that of the boys.
- The extent to which the senior leadership team, governing body and staff share a common ambition to bring about improvements.
- The extent to which pupils are challenged in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This larger than average primary school serves a mixed community which has changed in recent years due to the completion of a new housing estate. Most pupils have a White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average but that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and statements of special educational needs are much higher than average. The school manages a specially resourced provision for 10 pupils with autism and other special educational needs and/or disabilities, known as the resource base. It holds the 2007 Eco Schools Award and has Healthy School status. Millfield Primary is a lead school within the Primary Strategy Learning Network and provides some mixed-aged lessons. There have been recent improvements in the accommodation. The headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Millfield provides a satisfactory education. Many children enter the school with lower than average prior development. Both boys and girls now make satisfactory progress as they move through the school but, over the past three years, pupils' attainment on leaving the school has been low. The Early Years Foundation Stage, however, is one of the school's strengths, and children make good progress in their Reception year. The small number of pupils attending the resource base also make good progress. It is well managed, and teachers provide work appropriate to pupils' individual needs, finding a good balance of challenge and support.

Raising pupils' attainment has been given the highest priority by the senior leaders and the governing body. Together, they are working well with staff to evaluate the school's work and have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve. This is well founded on the careful tracking of pupils' progress and the close monitoring of lessons. Consequently, gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding have been identified and tackled, a new curriculum has been implemented and programmes of staff training provided. A new and effective tracking system is in use and assessment has become more accurate. As a result, there is an improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in lessons. Attainment is now rising. Leaders' success shows that the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

Millfield School is a caring school and places the good guidance and support it gives at the centre of its work, enabling all pupils to make the best of the opportunities the school provides. The value of the care, guidance and support given is much appreciated by parents and carers. Minor misbehaviour has been tackled and considerably reduced. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school because they know it is safe and staff provide for their needs. Pupils respond by participating in school and community activities well.

Through accurate self-evaluation, leaders recognise what has still to be done. They are following a range of strategies to ensure that the attainment of the pupils currently in Year 6 is above average when they leave the school, and early signs are that they are being successful. Leaders recognise that though teaching is satisfactory and improving, the challenge provided to pupils in lessons is not always sufficient, particularly the challenge provided for the most able pupils, and marking and oral feedback are not always effective. In addition, opportunities for independent work are sometimes limited in Years 1-6. The responsibilities of middle managers have recently been reallocated and they are not fully effective in their new roles. They are not yet evaluating their areas of responsibility effectively through use of performance data, and are not all fully confident in identifying, implementing and monitoring actions needed to bring about improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons by:
 - improving the challenge in lessons, particularly for the more able pupils
 - providing more opportunities for independent learning in Years 1-6
 - giving better guidance to pupils on how to improve, through marking and in lessons.
- Improve the capacity of middle leaders to:
 - evaluate their areas of responsibility more effectively through the better use of performance data
 - identify, implement and monitor actions needed to bring about improvements in their areas of responsibility

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

As children progress through the school, they acquire knowledge, develop understanding and practice skills satisfactorily and sometimes well. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and enjoy their learning. Lesson observations and school data show the quality of their learning is improving securely and quickly. Attainment at the end of Year 5 is now above average, especially in reading and writing. In a mixed-aged English lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils were seen making good progress when learning to change direct to indirect speech. In two lessons in mathematics in Year 6, pupils with different abilities were observed learning to solve problems and progressing well from their various starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactorily and sometimes good progress, for example where they have individual support. A small minority of pupils enter the school after the beginning of Year 1 and normally make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils. Occasionally pace of learning drops for more able pupils when work in lessons is not sufficiently matched to their needs, but overall achievement is satisfactory for all groups of pupils.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They reflect satisfactorily on their experiences and success in sport, and are sympathetic to other people's feelings, values and beliefs. They have a good understanding of issues to do with the environment. They are appropriately aware of the history and culture of the society in which they live, but their awareness of minority ethnic cultures is more limited. The school's new behaviour policy is ensuring that pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtime is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives, judgements endorsed by most parents and carers. Pupils play an active part in the school council, raise funds for charities and sing in a choir to provide entertainment outside the school. The rate of attendance is average. Pupils are eager to work together and with their teachers. This, and pupils' sound and improving progress in developing their key skills, prepares them satisfactorily for the future.

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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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

The aims and objectives of most lessons are made clear and a wide range of teaching styles used. In the majority of lessons, though not in some that are weaker, teachers are providing constructive feedback, which enables pupils to have a better understanding of what is needed to succeed and what they have to do to improve. At their best, lessons are brisk and challenging, expectations are high, and teachers use their knowledge and inventiveness to inspire and encourage pupils to learn. For example, in the special resource base for autistic children, a group of pupils of mixed age and with a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities were seen learning to calculate the time well and making good progress with excellent care and guidance and outstanding teaching. These good features are also improving the quality of learning and progress made by middle achieving pupils, but there are inconsistencies from class to class. In weaker lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunity to work independently, and this can limit how actively they are involved. Marking is good in some subjects and classes, but it does not give consistently good advice on how to improve. Teaching assistants are usually deployed well to support those pupils who find learning difficult.

The curriculum has recently been redeveloped and is now adequately matched to the needs of pupils. Some of its distinctive features which are helping pupils to improve their learning include cross-curricular links between literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT); French and Spanish for children in Years 3 to 6; and the

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use of the special resource base to help children with autism and other special educational needs and/or disabilities to learn. A two-year rolling curriculum has been introduced in some years to enable pupils to be taught together in mixed-aged classes. Lesson topics rotate and learning objectives enhanced to provide satisfactory challenge for those in the second year of the cycle. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including curriculum related clubs and sports, are provided. The football and the music club are the most popular and well attended.

There are good procedures for the support of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Intervention for those who need such support is well managed: staff are particularly effective in this regard and in establishing links with families of vulnerable pupils. Any incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with firmly and appropriate actions taken. All staff promote the emotional and social well-being of pupils well and have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils develop good self-esteem and say they feel well supported. There are good transition arrangements between the school and the receiving secondary schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have a clear vision of the future of the school and their satisfactory drive for improvement is shared by the staff. Governance is good. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what remains to be done. It provides good support, challenges managers, and contributes well to discussions on strategy. The governing body has established effective and rigorous ways to monitor performance and places strong emphasis on treating each pupil as an individual, without any discrimination. All leaders are determined to help pupils to achieve their full potential. Variations in the performance of different groups of pupils are evaluated carefully and appropriate steps are taken to address them.

Rigorous checks are carried out on all newly-appointed staff and good central records kept. The school has clear policies for health and safety, which are reviewed regularly. Safety checks are carried out by appropriate external authorities and any recommendations they make are acted upon well. Staff have been well trained in child protection and regular risk assessments are taken. The school engages well with outside agencies to support the safety and well-being of the pupils.

Leaders have an informed understanding of the community they serve. Pupils participate in many activities in the local community. Links with other schools in this and other

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countries are developing. The school engages with parents and carers satisfactorily through newsletters, coffee mornings, an annual parents' evening and reports, and regular surveys of their views.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception Year with lower skills than expected for their age, especially in the use of language, speaking and analytical skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff use their good understanding of how young children learn to inspire and help them to make good progress from their various starting points. By the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is broadly average. Good use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas. Activities are well planned and there is a good balance between activities chosen by children and those led by teachers. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to children's learning and enjoyment. A new system of tracking children's progress is providing useful information about their learning and where it might be improved. Developing the use of this information is a priority staff have rightly identified. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader ensures that children's welfare needs are met well. Staff are skilled at promoting positive attitudes and ensuring that all children are engaged and included. Safeguarding procedures are good and given a high priority.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Most of these say that their children enjoy school and that the school helps their children to lead healthy lifestyles and keeps them safe. One parent said 'All three children are happy and progressing extremely well'. A few parents and carers say that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour in the school is good. Although parents and carers receive end-of-year reports, a small minority disagree that the school informs them sufficiently about their child's progress. The school is aware of this and is looking at what can be done.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Millfield Primary 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 157 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 298 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	44	79	50	5	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	68	43	80	51	5	3	3	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	25	85	54	29	18	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	31	78	50	18	11	5	3
The teaching is good at this school	50	32	91	58	8	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	29	92	59	14	9	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	30	103	66	4	3	2	1
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)	37	24	83	53	11	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	23	97	62	20	13	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	19	81	52	30	19	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	20	96	61	13	8	5	3
The school is led and managed effectively	30	19	89	57	20	13	6	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	27	97	62	7	5	2	1

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.



9 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Millfield Primary School, North Walsham, NR28 0ES

My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and welcomed the opportunity to see you at work in your lessons. We judged your school to be satisfactory, which means that it does some things well - especially the way you are cared for and kept safe, and the work done in the Reception year - but also has some features that need to be improved.

The new headteacher and other adults that run your school have made many good changes to your school in a past seventeen months. They have provided you with a new programme of lessons to make your learning more exciting and enjoyable and new ways to record how well you are doing. Your class teachers are helping you to improve your learning.

There are still things that could be better. We have asked the headteacher, staff and governing body to do the following things to help you.

Make teaching even better by making work a bit harder for those who find learning easy, helping you to learn more independently, and giving you more guidance on how to improve.

Help teachers who lead particular subjects or areas to look more closely at what has been working well and not so well, and to take actions to improve your education and make sure they work.

I know that the adults that lead your school are keen to do these things and you can help them by always working hard, listening to what teachers say about how to improve, and doing your best work.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thompson

Lead Inspector

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