

Mill Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121330
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	358987
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sheila Sutton
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Hanscombe
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons taught by seven teachers were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's improvement plan, attainment and tracking data, pupils' work and the school's safeguarding procedures and policies. The responses in 35 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 15 completed by staff and 91 from pupils were considered.

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

- If the rise in attainment, as seen in published data, is being maintained and if the majority of pupils are now making at least expected progress?
- The extent to which improvements to teaching and the curriculum are increasing pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- If improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage provision have had an impact on children's progress?
- How well all staff contribute to school improvement.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, so too is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

Since January 2011, the headteacher has been seconded to another school in the locality, for part of each week. In the headteacher's absence, the deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher. This arrangement ends in July 2011.

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

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory and their attainment is in line with that expected for their age by the end of Year 6. A rising trend of attainment since the previous inspection reflects the school's good improvements to the quality of teaching and the curriculum since then. Provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved to good since the previous inspection. Children now make good progress during the year to reach the goals set for them at the end of Reception.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with much that is good. The teaching of writing and mathematics skills and strategies is not as precise or clear as it needs to be to ensure that pupils can retain and apply their new learning to different activities over time, and this is holding back progress in some classes to satisfactory rather than good. Nevertheless, there is much good practice developing, with increasing numbers of pupils, including the most able, beginning to show good progress in these subjects. Improvements to the curriculum, making it more relevant to pupils' interests, is firing their enthusiasm and making learning more enjoyable. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good and helps learning to progress smoothly. Recent disruptions at lunchtime, stemming from some overly boisterous behaviour of a very few pupils, have been tackled robustly by the school. Leaders now recognise the need for additional specialist support for some pupils in managing their behaviour. Overall, pupils have a strong sense of citizenship and are keen to contribute to their own and the local community through events, competitions and visits. A strong sense of care pervades the school because staff know pupils well and are alert to any changing needs. Guidance is satisfactory in developing pupils' personal qualities and ensuring they are aware of hazards to their health and well-being.

A clear vision and determined leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, have kept the school on a path of steady improvement since the previous inspection, with much that has been good. The school accurately evaluates its effectiveness and identifies the correct areas for improvement. Staff are involved well in improving the school and have a very positive 'can do' attitude to change. Subject leaders in English and mathematics have worked well with staff to raise standards since the previous inspection and are rightly aware that there is more to be done to accelerate progress and raise standards further in their subjects. Given the range and impact of improvements since the previous inspection, the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

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?

- Raise attainment and increase progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - embedding a systematic approach to teaching key skills in writing and calculation strategies in mathematics so that pupils' understanding is secure and they are able to apply these skills confidently in new situations
 - expanding the monitoring roles of English and mathematics leaders to enable them to identify areas for development quickly so they can take action to improve provision and support colleagues by sharing the most effective practice; and by ensuring they have regular, dedicated time to fulfil these responsibilities.
- Improve lunchtime behaviour by:
 - enlisting specialist expertise to support those few pupils who need additional help to manage their own behaviour more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning, and in particular they thrive and make good progress when the teaching of new skills and strategies is clear and followed up with plenty of activity to reinforce new learning. Pupils enjoy a good range of learning methods and relish working with others. They know what is expected of them in lessons and the majority work hard to please their teachers and complete tasks. Pupils' attainment is showing a rising trend by the end of Year 6, after a long period of being significantly below average. Since the previous inspection attainment has risen to average in English and mathematics, and this improvement is being sustained in the current Year 6. From broadly average starting points in Year 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have made expected progress and their achievement is satisfactory. Progress and performance in reading still outstrip that in writing and mathematics, mainly because reading skills are taught more systematically and plenty of practice is given to consolidate them.

Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall, because the good behaviour seen in lessons is not sustained by all pupils during the lunch break. Here, some overly boisterous behaviour of a small minority of pupils, which has recently developed, reflects negatively on the majority of pupils who behave well. The school is effectively managing this unhelpful behaviour to minimise its impact, but lack of additional expert support undermines attempts to help this small group of pupils manage their behaviour better. Pupils feel safe in school and they know who they would go to for help if they had a concern. They show a sound understanding of healthy lifestyles and many take up lunchtime sporting activities to keep fit. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities within the school through the eco-group, playground friends and the school council. Pupils have a satisfactory foundation for future learning. The vast majority understand how their actions affect others, willingly follow school rules and support each other in class.

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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	3
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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and there is much good teaching across the school as a result of a concerted effort by staff and senior leaders to improve teaching and learning. This is developing pupils' enthusiasm for learning and there are clear signs of progress accelerating to good in a number of classes. In the best lessons, teachers plan different tasks so that all pupils are challenged well and able to work independently. This acts as a spur, especially to lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, because their confidence grows as they see themselves working alongside their peers and enjoying the same success. Good questioning in many lessons gives teachers a clear idea where learning is either moving ahead quickly or faltering, so they are able to adjust their explanations to match the different needs of pupils. Learning slows when teachers do not teach skills in literacy, or strategies in mathematics, with enough clarity or precision for all pupils to be confident in their independent work. Some good assessment practices are leading the way in showing pupils how they can improve their work and reach higher targets, though these are not yet consistent in all classes.

The curriculum is developing well to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom and to make useful links between subjects. Pupils report that this makes their learning, 'more interesting and real'. Provision for basic skills is satisfactory and improving, as staff become more adept at identifying gaps in pupils' learning and plan activities to overcome these so that progression through the literacy and numeracy curriculum is becoming more

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consistent and effective. The curriculum is adapted effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given the interventions and support they need to make the same progress as their peers. Extra-curricular activities have expanded since the previous inspection and pupils enjoy a good range of activities, mostly at lunchtimes, which develop new talents and interests.

Staff know pupils and their families well and are alert to any changing needs that pupils may have. Good relationships between staff and pupils create a warm, caring environment in which pupils thrive. Guidance for pupils' personal development is satisfactory and ensures pupils are able to assess risks to their safety and well-being. Provision for those pupils whose circumstances may place them at risk of becoming vulnerable ensures they are able to take part in all the school has to offer and make the same progress as their peers. The school has recently overcome some difficulties to access specialist support for a few such pupils, who have severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, because of its tenacious approach to supporting these pupils.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a clear vision for creating a school where every child achieves their best. They have won the wholehearted support of staff, governors and parents to this vision by successfully developing teachers' skills and raising pupils' attainment since the previous inspection. Staff morale is high because staff are aware of their contribution to the school's brisk improvement. School evaluation is accurate and used effectively to promote further improvement. Middle leaders have made good contributions to improvements, but action to accelerate the raising of attainment further is not always precisely targeted or prompt. The school recognises that leaders in English and mathematics need regular dedicated time to fulfil their duties more effectively.

The governing body is organised well and makes regular contact with the school and parents to seek and then act upon their views. Governors are aware of the challenges the school faces and have given effective support in securing the financial stability of the school since the previous inspection. Equal opportunities are supported by staff who ensure that no pupils are discriminated against. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements; an issue that was brought to the attention of the school during inspection was acted upon immediately to reduce risk. Community cohesion is promoted effectively in the school and local community, but less so further afield and is recognised as an area for improvement. Good links with parents support pupils' learning and sense of well-being and help parents to discover ways of supporting their children's learning at home.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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 make good progress in the Reception class from below average starting points, especially in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Reception Year nearly all reach the levels expected for their age. Children are supported well in their learning by staff who take careful note of their interests and development so that they are always challenged well and happy in their learning. Provision indoors and outdoors is exciting and filled with many tempting activities that allow the children to develop independence and supportive relationships.

A strength of the provision is the integration of Year 1 pupils with Reception children. This allows staff to teach children key skills according to their stage of development so that they have the right starting points for new learning and always feel as successful learners. Links with parents are very strong and parents comment that they are delighted with the progress that their children make and the support they are given to understand how to help their children's learning at home. Good leadership and management have developed excellent teamwork. This makes the best use of staff strengths to continually develop provision and support children's accelerating progress.

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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

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and are confident that their children are safe and happy when they are there. A small minority of parents raised a concern about some lunchtime behaviour which adversely affects the playtime of others. A similar number praised the school for how well their children had settled into school and made good progress in the Reception class. Inspectors found that incidents of misbehaviour at lunchtime have increased since the middle of the previous term. They found that the school has taken robust and sustained action to manage this situation, including training for lunchtime staff and establishing lunchtime clubs for pupils. Inspectors agree with the school's next step in providing specialist support for a very few pupils who need help in self-managing their behaviour. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' positive views about the Reception class and how well it promotes their children's learning and confidence.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mill Hill Community 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	46	19	54	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	34	22	63	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	54	16	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	51	17	49	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	69	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	63	13	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	54	13	37	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)	15	43	17	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	51	17	49	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	26	22	63	2	6	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	31	21	60	0	0	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	19	54	15	43	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	60	14	40	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mill Hill Community Primary School, Northallerton DL6 1AE

Thank you all for the warm, friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We are pleased to tell you that your school provides a satisfactory standard of education so that you make the same progress as most other children of your age and you reach average standards by the time you leave. Your school is improving well, as some of you have noticed. Your lessons are more active and interesting and you have a clearer idea of what is expected of you. We could see that you enjoy learning and your behaviour in lessons is good, so everyone is able to learn. A few of you told us that sometimes behaviour at lunchtimes is not as good as it should be. We agree, and have asked the school to make further improvements to the lunchtime behaviour of those few pupils who 'go too far'. Well done to those of you who raised the issue, for being good citizens. And well done everyone for your good contribution to the community.

Your teachers have made a number of improvements to the curriculum so that you have more visits and more visiting experts. We could see that this is increasing your enthusiasm for school and helping you to improve your basic skills in literacy and numeracy. To help improve these even further we have asked the school to make sure that teaching in these subjects is very clear and helps you to progress in small steps that ensure you understand and can use new learning. For example, so you are able to use the right methods for calculating in mathematics or the right order of ideas in your writing. We have also suggested that your school leaders in English and mathematics could help these improvements by visiting lessons and seeing what works well and sharing the best ideas with everyone.

Your headteacher, staff, parents and governors all want the best for you. They have made many improvements recently and have many more planned to make sure that you are the best you can be. You can help by being as hardworking and enthusiastic as you now are, and by helping each other not to 'go too far' with behaviour on the playground at lunchtime. Our good wishes for the future to all at Mill Hill Primary.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector

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