

Millbrook Community Primary School

Kirkby Row, Westvale, Kirkby, Liverpool, L32 0TG

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching requires improvement. It has not been good enough to enable pupils to achieve consistently well between Year 1 and Year 6 for the last three years.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Teachers often talk for too long in lessons and there are too few chances for pupils to discuss their ideas and work things out for themselves.
- Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of their pupils.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively throughout the lesson.
- The system for collecting pupil progress information does not easily identify the progress made by specific groups in school.
- Although leaders' actions have improved teaching, more work is needed to make sure that all teaching is of good or better quality.
- The ability of the governing body to challenge the performance of the school is limited because they do not effectively analyse national performance data. As a result the school has not improved fast enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a flying start because of consistently good teaching.
- Recently introduced teaching methods are helping to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good with an example of outstanding teaching.
- Pupils feel safe in school and behave very well. They are courteous, friendly and polite.
- The curriculum includes a range of additional activities which add variety and enjoyment to pupils' learning.
- School leaders, including governors, are now more aware of what needs to be done to improve attainment and achievement. They are putting actions in place to move the school forward.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 parts of lessons and sessions taken by teaching assistants. They also listened to Year 2 and Year 6 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, members of the governing body and a local authority representative. A telephone conversation took place with the headteacher of a partner school, Northwood Primary School.
- The inspectors took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the summary information from two sets of questionnaires distributed to parents by the school. They also considered 11 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school’s analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about pupils’ progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. The inspectors also examined work in pupils’ books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian Wellens

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Millbrook is larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection, including an increase in the number of teaching assistants, and a new deputy headteacher will start in September 2013.
- Millbrook is a member of the Kirkby Collaborative, which is a partnership of local schools.
- The school works in partnership with Northwood Designated Specialist Provision to provide for the needs of pupils with a range of vulnerabilities.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, especially between Year 1 and Year 6, to raise standards in English and mathematics by making sure that:
 - expectations of the quality and quantity of work pupils are expected to produce are consistently high
 - teachers' marking always makes it clear to pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve
 - pupils are given time to respond to teachers' written guidance in their marking to correct and edit their work
 - teaching assistants are always effectively deployed throughout the lesson, especially at the start of lessons
 - teachers talk less in lessons and pupils have more opportunities to learn to work by themselves and in small groups rather than always being directed by the teacher.
- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership by further developing:
 - systems for checking on the progress of individuals and groups of pupils so that information is more readily available and can be analysed and quickly acted upon when necessary
 - the skills of the governing body, especially their understanding of national performance data, to enable them to more effectively hold school leaders to account for the achievement of pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Results of the 2012 national tests for Year 6 pupils and pupil assessment data indicate that progress made by pupils is inconsistent between Year 1 and Year 6. Moreover, work in pupils' books showed that the quality and quantity of work that pupils are expected to produce is not always of a high quality. As a result, achievement requires improvement.
- Most pupils make the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Too few pupils make more than this, though the proportion is increasing.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 declined slightly over the last three years and is slightly below average. However, the pupils who left school in 2012 included a number of pupils with additional needs who joined the school late in Key Stage 2 and there were a number of staffing changes. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach their targets and to improve results in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison to the standards attained in recent years.
- Children start Nursery class with skills and knowledge below typically expected. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 at broadly average levels having made particularly good progress with their literacy, number and social skills.
- Attainment in reading was broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012. However, the school is eager to improve upon this and a new method of teaching reading and writing has been introduced across the school. Staff have been trained to use the strategy, and reading and writing are now being taught well and, as a result, pupils' progress is accelerating. Pupils confidently use their phonics skills in matching letters and sounds to read new words and older pupils who read to inspectors did so competently and clearly enjoyed books.
- The 2012 end of Key Stage 2 national tests showed that in English and mathematics pupils' eligible for free school meals attained below similar pupils nationally. They were one and a half years behind their classmates in English and almost one year behind in mathematics. The progress that they made from their starting points was also below other pupils. The same is true for disabled pupils and those with special education needs. However, school leaders are now tackling this issue and narrowing the gaps effectively, which confirms their commitment to equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although good and outstanding teaching was observed, this is not a consistent feature across the school and does not yet result in good and sustained pupil progress across the school. Therefore, teaching requires improvement.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is improving following the introduction of additional small-group sessions taught by specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants work very well with small groups and individuals. However, their talents are not so effectively used when teachers are introducing lessons, especially when these introductions are overly long. Such teacher-directed activity also prevents pupils from having enough opportunities to work by themselves and to work together, sharing their ideas and reflecting on their learning.
- Some marking provides a good level of guidance to pupils, congratulating them on what they have done well and offering advice on how to improve their work. However, marking does not always provide good enough guidance and teachers' comments are not always followed up because pupils are not given time to correct and edit their work.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good and children are eager to learn as their particular interests form the basis of most activities. Progress is carefully checked and there are excellent relationships with parents.
- Where teaching is good and better, teachers provide an environment in which pupils can work

together to meet their learning goals. Staff monitor pupils' progress during the lesson and step in only when necessary. For example, in one outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils were highly motivated by the theme-park topic to produce accurate pie charts. They were able to explain confidently what they had learned and the reasons for the decisions that they had made, during a lesson in which the pace was vigorous and demands on pupils high.

- Across the school teachers manage behaviour well and have a range of resources prepared so that lessons run efficiently. Pupils know that they can ask for help from their teacher. As one pupil said, 'When we don't know what to do we don't say we are stuck, we say we are challenged!'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes toward learning and respond well to the systems the school uses to manage behaviour. As a result behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and records show that this is typical. Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally, when teachers talk for too long, pupils can become a little distracted from their learning.
- Pupils' are polite and well mannered, which helps visitors to feel very welcome at the school. They are considerate toward each other and really appreciate what the adults in school do for them. Pupils who spoke to inspectors wholeheartedly agreed that 'staff are brilliant' and described themselves as 'one big family'.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents unanimously agree that their children are well cared for. Pupils understand different forms of bullying including cyber-bullying. They say that there is no bullying in school but if there were an adult would very quickly and effectively help them to sort out their problems. Pupils have recently released blue balloons to send the message that bullying is unacceptable.
- Pupils take their roles and responsibilities seriously. The school council organises events to raise money for charity and runs the school stationery shop, the proceeds of which contributes toward school trips. The council are particularly proud of their involvement in appointing the new deputy headteacher. Older pupils are trained as play leaders and they teach younger pupils new games, they enjoy doing this because they want to be helpful.
- The school considers pupils' social and emotional development to be of great importance. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies to make sure that pupils and their families get the support that they need.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance, which is now average, and any absences are closely followed up by the learning mentor.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership is beginning to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, but changes have not been in place long enough to secure sustained improvements in pupils' attainment and achievement.
- Pupils' progress data does not permit information about individuals and specific groups of pupils to be easily analysed. Consequently, it is difficult for leaders to assess pupils' progress and to intervene quickly when necessary.
- Teaching is closely checked by school leaders. Staff are encouraged to attend training that fits with school priorities and their own developmental needs. The leadership team knows what needs improving and is achieving success in raising the quality of teaching.
- Targets are set for all teachers and school leaders to check on their performance. Systems are currently being put in place to reward teachers where performance is good or better and to deal with underperformance.
- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be and a detailed evaluation of what is happening in school is available. School leaders have identified priorities and put

actions in place that have put the school in a stronger position to move forward. However, the school's perception of itself is a little overly positive.

- The curriculum is enriched by a range of after-school activities, trips and specialist teaching. For example, every child in Key Stage 2 is provided with the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Good attention is given to personal development and this effectively promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works very well with the local specialist provision to provide for the needs of pupils requiring additional support.
- The local authority brokers support for the work of the Kirkby Collaborative. The school has benefitted from engaging in the outstanding teacher programme and support for improving mathematics provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive of the school. However, they now recognise that they must ask more searching questions and improve their skills in analysing national performance data so that they can hold school leaders more rigorously to account regarding pupils' progress. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and actions being taken to improve it. They are also aware that salary increases must be linked to how effective teachers are in their work. The budget is managed effectively, including the pupil-premium grant, which is used to fund increased staffing that is beginning to have an impact on the progress of pupils eligible for the award. Governors fulfil their statutory duties; including making sure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	104432
Local authority	Knowsley
Inspection number	413127

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Ely
Headteacher	Jane Maloney
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
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