

Milford Primary School

Chevin Road, Milford, Belper, DE56 0QH

Inspection dates

21 March 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Not all pupils achieve well enough from their broadly average starting points. Pupils do not always learn at a sufficiently rapid rate, which limits their overall progress.
- Teaching is not consistently good and none is outstanding. Some pupils find the work they are given too easy and others find it too difficult.
- Marking does not always make clear to pupils how they could improve their work.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not positive enough. Sometimes they lose interest in their work and do not try hard.
- The school's view of itself is too generous and a few priorities for improvement in its development plan are not challenging enough.
- Subject leaders do not monitor the impact of teaching on the learning and progress of all pupils rigorously and, consequently, they have not had enough impact on achievement and teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching has improved since September 2013.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' books show that most are making better progress than in recent years. Pupils in Year 4 have made good progress in English and mathematics. Most pupils across the school make good progress in reading.
- The headteacher enjoys the confidence of parents and support of staff. He has significantly improved the curriculum and systems for tracking pupils' progress.
- New governance is rigorously holding the school to account for raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons taught by all teachers. Three of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read during their lessons. They looked at samples of pupils' work with subject leaders for English and mathematics.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, two members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of 21 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the school's recent surveys of parents' opinions. They also examined the responses on six questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a variety of school documentation including: minutes of governing body's meetings, the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding policies and procedures, records of behaviour, attendance, and pupils' learning and progress since the previous inspection considered jointly with the headteacher.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Milford Primary is smaller than most primary schools. Almost a half of pupils are from the local area with the majority travelling from as far afield as Ripley and Derby. Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is the additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care or from families where a parent is in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. A similar proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Milford Pre-School, situated on the same site, is managed independently from the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.
- Since the previous inspection, more pupils are on roll and a new teacher is in post to teach Years 4, 5 and 6. A new Chair of the Governing Body and other new members are also in post.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is, at least, consistently good and raise pupils' achievement by making sure that:
 - learning tasks enable all pupils to learn at a fast enough rate so that they gain new knowledge, skills and understanding securely
 - the work pupils are given stretches and challenges them and is neither too easy nor too difficult
 - pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they apply themselves well to challenging work
 - teachers' marking always makes clear to pupils how they could improve their work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - the school's self-evaluation is accurate and leads to robust planning for improvement
 - subject leaders rigorously monitor the impact of teaching on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils across the school in writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because standards declined in the last two years and pupils did not all make as much progress as they should. Although progress is improving for many pupils currently in the school, there are still instances where pupils do not make enough progress in lessons.
- Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 fell from above average in 2011 to below average in 2012 and 2013. Too few pupils made more than the nationally expected rate of progress in English and mathematics. These results should be treated with caution, however, because the numbers of pupils in each year group are small and there is more statistical variation than in most schools.
- Lessons, pupils' books and information about their progress show that some pupils find their learning tasks too easy and others find them too difficult. For example, in the Years 4, 5 and 6 class, Year 4 pupils have made the best progress over time because work has been challenging for them, but less so for the older pupils.
- Children join the Reception Year with skills and knowledge in line with the expectations for their age. They make good progress and, by the time they move up to Year 1, most children achieve a good level of development in all areas of learning.
- In 2012, a well-above average proportion of pupils reached the nationally expected level in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) screening check. In 2013, results were less strong, but were still above average.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been consistently average in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years. Most pupils make the expected amount of progress at Key Stage 1 and some do better than this.
- Pupils' work shows that the majority of pupils at Key Stage 2 are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics relative to their different starting points. Evidence from their books shows that pupils in Year 5 and 6 are currently working at the higher levels.
- The very few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium made more progress than their classmates in writing and mathematics in 2013 because effective additional support was provided for them. They continue to make good progress, especially in reading. There were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 to evaluate their attainment without identifying individuals.
- More-able pupils are currently making good progress. The more able in Year 6 are working within the higher National Curriculum levels with a considerable increase in the proportion of those on course to make expected or better-than-expected progress.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because they receive good support for their learning.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- Too little teaching is good or better. Pupils' work, school data and learning seen during the inspection confirm this.
- Occasionally, pupils of different ages and abilities all do the same work. As a result, some find learning too hard and others too easy. This was also confirmed in discussion with pupils, some of whom said that their spellings were too easy.
- On occasion, pupils' writing and mathematics work is not marked to show them what they need to learn next. For example, literacy books show that pupils' work is usually stamped with 'learning objective achieved' but, sometimes, no reference is made to how well pupils used English grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing or how to improve their writing further. Equally, in mathematics, marking is often confined to lots of ticks and feedback such as 'excellent work' with little indication of how pupils could extend their learning further.
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils' good grounding in phonics is built on successfully and helps pupils of all ages to become competent in managing text.
- Teachers and teaching assistants usually provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs by explaining technical language and giving examples of how to do a particular task. For example, they encouraged these pupils to select adjectives to describe particular nouns, which they did well and ensured they made the same progress as their classmates in using adjectives in sentences.
- Pupils' work and the school's data show that teaching of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and leads to good learning and progress. Children were observed eagerly counting forwards and backwards together to 20, and then ordering and sequencing large number cards to 20 in the outdoor learning area – all of which they did well and with great enjoyment.
- Teaching in Year 1 is good. Although mixed ages are taught together, Year 1 pupils are given challenging work to stretch their thinking and extend their learning. For example, while the Reception children worked separately and could count up to 20, Year 1 pupils could count in units of 20 up to 100 and moved on to count successfully in units of 30.
- Pupils' books show that Year 6 are given tasks which challenge their thinking in writing and mathematics. For example, the learning of more-able pupils is extended with all working at the higher levels of the National Curriculum.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Sometimes, pupils talk over others or are too slow in moving from one task to the next. Occasionally, work in pupils' books shows that they lose concentration in learning. The incident book reflects that, sometimes, behaviour is not as good as it might be.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning require improvement because they are not always fully engaged in their learning activities. Some lose focus on their learning during lessons, particularly when they find work too hard or too easy. These situations limit their progress.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Occasionally, pupils do not play safely outside and sometimes they do not move safely in school. For example, at the

end of the morning workout, some pupils moved too quickly from the crowded hall to their classrooms without due consideration for others. However, leaders make sure that access to the building is secure and that staff are rigorously checked for their suitability.

- Pupils agree that bullying is rare and, should any occur, they are confident that it would be dealt with effectively by staff. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying and know how to try to prevent it.
- Attendance is above average and has remained as such in recent years. Most pupils are punctual for lessons and ready to start work directly.
- Pupils are usually respectful, courteous and polite to visitors. Staff provide good role models for pupils to follow. Staff make good use of rewards and sanctions to manage behaviour in lessons.
- Parents, staff and pupils do not express concerns about behaviour or safety in school. Where teachers' expectations are high enough, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The schools' view of itself is over-generous because leaders have taken insufficient account of the proportions of pupils making better-than-expected progress or of the fall in standards at Key Stage 2 in the past two years. This generous view of itself is reflected in a few moderate targets for improvement being set for Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics, rather than challenging targets to rapidly speed up learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils have achieved equally well over time, so promotion of equality of opportunity is not secure.
- Subject leaders are not rigorous enough in checking the impact of teaching on the learning and progress that different groups of pupils are making over time in each subject.
- The headteacher has made good use of performance management to tackle weak teaching, which has resulted in an improvement in teaching at Key Stage 2 this year. Performance objectives are linked to the national standards for teaching and to priorities for raising achievement in writing and mathematics. As a result, the school's accurate data show the pupils are on course to achieve much better results than in previous years.
- The headteacher has greatly improved assessment systems. Precise and detailed up-to-date information about pupils' progress is stored in an online database. Progress of pupils in each class is discussed at termly meetings, identifying which pupils are at, above or below expected levels and providing strategies and support to narrow any gaps in performance. These progress data are regularly checked to verify that teachers' assessment is accurate.
- The curriculum has been strengthened to engage pupils, for example, through the local authority's 'Inspire Space' project aimed at getting pupils interested in science, engineering and the space industry. As part of this project, pupils saw moon rock in school, visited the large Hadron Collider near Geneva and are planning their forthcoming trip to the Russian Space Programme in Korolev near Moscow in June 2014.
- Pupils are also given good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument and the school is a lead member of the Belper Music Group. There is a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs to enrich learning, such as craft, chess, recorder and sports clubs with good take-up from

pupils. Regular school trips include residential experience at an outdoor adventure activity centre.

- Pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is promoted effectively. For example, there are celebrations of success, opportunities for reflection, occasions when pupils can work as a team and opportunities to develop their awareness of cultural diversity.
- The school makes full use of its primary sport funding to bring in coaches with specialist skills to work alongside teachers. The specialists contribute their professional development in teaching physical education.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school to review its work and, in the autumn term 2013, carried out a full review, rightly concluding that all aspects required improvement and setting out clear challenging targets for the school to pursue. The local authority also led sharply focused training in the scrutiny of pupils' work for subject leaders and governors. It then led joint scrutinies of pupils' work and activities with subject leaders and governors to develop their skills further. This has led to improvements in pupils' learning and progress as a result of better teaching.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have recently carried out an audit of their skills. Under strong leadership and direction from the new Chair of the Governing Body, the governors are now working hard and are committed to school improvement. During the last year, the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body have effectively reorganised meetings so they are more efficient and enable governors to make informed decisions. These sessions pose challenge to the headteacher and staff as governors are asking for increasingly detailed information about pupils' progress, the standards they are achieving and the quality of provision. Through regular visits, governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and make sure that staff are rewarded only when they are effective in ensuring pupils make progress. They are overseeing performance management of staff well. They are holding the school to account for its spending of pupil premium funding and primary sport funding. They are ensuring the school meets its legal requirements for safeguarding, for example, in ensuring checks on staff are rigorous and that all training is up to date.

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	112788
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	434609

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	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Taylor
Headteacher	Simon Field
Date of previous school inspection	5 April 2011
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