

Millbrook Primary School

Grainger Drive, Leegomery, Telford, TF1 6UJ

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Following many staff changes since the previous inspection, the headteacher has created a united team of staff and governors who share the ambition for school improvement. This has resulted in the school moving forward rapidly.
- Most pupils currently are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching in phonics (the sounds letters represent in words) and literacy is consistently good leading to much improved standards and progress of all pupils.
- The school's English as an additional language provision offers effective support to the pupils and their families which gives a positive start to children's experiences in school.
- Pupils' good behaviour helps them learn effectively. They take pride in their work and are keen to show what they have learned.
- Pupils feel safe and are very caring of each other. They are well looked after by staff.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have created a climate where staff are expected to continually improve teaching. High priority is given to supporting and training staff in order to improve the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement. This has been very successful.
- Governors are skilled, knowledgeable and know the school extremely well. They provide high levels of support and challenge, ensuring that teaching and achievement continue to improve rapidly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While much of the teaching is good, not enough is outstanding to drive pupils' progress rapidly. The most able pupils do not always have hard enough work to make sure they make as much progress as possible.
- Marking in subjects other than literacy and numeracy is not at the same standard and does not consistently offer pupils' sufficient guidance on how to improve their work in the same way.
- The role of the new subject leaders is not yet developed to ensure lessons and extra support helps all groups to make rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and four parts of lessons, including three which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at break time and at lunchtime, both inside the school and in the playground. They listened to a sample of pupils read from Years 2 and 3.
- Inspectors observed the school at work, visited assemblies and looked at a wide range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; pupils' workbooks; external moderators' reports of assessment; plans for supporting disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; and minutes of the meetings of the governing body. Discussions were held with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher, other school leaders and other members of staff.
- There were only two responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), which the inspectors were unable to take into account. Instead the inspectors took account of the school parental survey carried out in March 2014. They also spoke to a number of parents about the school.

Inspection team

Terrance Mortimer, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Anna Smith	Additional Inspector
Lesley Else	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-size primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are White British with a substantial minority of pupils from mainly White and Asian, and any Other White background.
- Approximately one quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for particular groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and looked after children is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special needs supported through school action is below the national average but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special needs is higher than that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club and afterschool activities.
- School works in partnership with St George's school where professional support is reciprocated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding thus raising pupils' attainment and further accelerating their progress by:
 - setting demanding but realistic tasks and activities that challenge all pupils at the right levels
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills across the wider curriculum
 - consistently using the good practice that exists in marking in literacy and numeracy in all other subjects in order to improve standards.
- Increase the impact of all subject leaders by using the good practice existing in literacy and numeracy as models to improve their skills and understanding to ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is better now than at the time of the previous inspection. The school's current data show that attainment is rising and that the progress of pupils throughout the school is accelerating.
- Decisive actions taken by the headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors, have improved teaching, sharpened the accuracy of assessment of pupils' achievement and raised the expectations for pupils. As a result, progress is accelerating rapidly.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills that are below typical levels for their age, particularly in their communication and language. Good-quality care and skilful teaching ensure that they gain confidence and make good progress in developing their early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- The current group of Reception children started school with skills that were below those typical for their age, especially in personal, social and emotional development, language, reading and writing. However, they are making good progress as a result of good teaching and attaining at higher levels than achieved last year at the end of the Reception Year.
- Good progress is continuing in Key Stage 1. Well-structured teaching of phonics (the sounds letters represent in words), and good regular reading at school and at home, sustain the effective step-by-step development of pupils' literacy skills throughout the school.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, in 2013, pupils attained results below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics though this was a rise from 2012, following a more rigorous assessment of Key Stage 1. Current data show that there has been an even bigger improvement and indicate pupils are attaining at higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The focus the school has had on improving the reading and writing of the younger pupils has been extremely effective. This begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit, where phonics is promoted at every opportunity and children are keen to show off their early writing skills.
- In 2013, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below average in reading, mathematics and writing. Progress was also low. The school has dealt with the issue of poor teaching effectively and taken positive action to improve pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessment information, shows that in all subjects, most pupils now make good progress and standards of attainment are rising.
- Progress in mathematics is not as quick as in reading and writing, partly because pupils do not consistently have the opportunity to develop their thinking neither when solving mathematical problems in practical situations nor in other aspects of the curriculum.
- In Year 6, there is evidence of the most-able pupils producing work at the higher levels, though occasionally teaching does not always challenge them enough. The most able pupils are, this year, working in targeted groups at level 6 in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have their needs identified early. They receive good well-targeted support quickly and are making faster progress than previously. This results in progress which is now as good as that of other pupils, especially in reading and writing.

- Pupils who benefit from pupil premium support have accelerated their progress because of extra adult help. As a result, previous gaps in attainment between these pupils and other pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2013, of nearly six months in reading and writing and mathematics, have all been closed. Pupils supported by the pupil premium now achieve as well as other pupils and are making good progress.
- The improved performance in the 2013 screening check on phonics though below national, and their above-average scores in the Year 2 re-check show that teaching of phonics is now more effective.
- Standards in physical education are improving thanks to effective use of the new primary school sport funding in partnership with the secondary school. Sports coaches lead lessons and provide training for the staff and clubs for pupils which have resulted in improved performances.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching and its impact on learning have improved significantly since the previous inspection as a result of the successful actions taken by the headteacher and governors, to improve its quality. Leaders' own lesson observations, undertaken with a local authority representative over the past year, support this judgement. Discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their books show that teaching has been typically good over time for the last year. Parents also agree that their children are taught well.
- Children are enthusiastic about learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching is good. The balance between adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves is planned extremely carefully to ensure the rapid development of their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The result of improved provision in Nursery and Reception is that children persevere with tasks very well and constantly use their imagination and creativity. For example, children were thoroughly engrossed in their talk about 'fishing and the different size containers they were using', or 'making different shapes with the large apparatus' and talked animatedly about the shapes they have made. The children, led skilfully by the class teacher, used a very wide range of language, vocabulary and mark making.
- Pupils develop very good relationships with their teachers and teaching assistants. They appreciate the very effective support and guidance provided by teachers and other adults. Staff are extremely supportive of the school and want to do their best for the pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and what their behaviour should be like. Teachers and teaching assistants use questions extremely well to check pupils' understanding in lessons. They assess pupils' attainment accurately but do not always use this information effectively enough to challenge all pupils. This leads to insufficient challenge being provided for some pupils, particularly the most able.
- The teaching of reading and phonics is of a high quality and consistently good which has been well led and managed by the deputy headteacher who coaches staff well. Focused phonics sessions make sure that pupils learn early reading skills. Features of these sessions are teachers' subject knowledge, their clear instructions and their awareness of the need to keep a brisk pace.
- The teaching of writing is good. The teaching in one lesson, where the teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their use of punctuation, showed children in a Year 6 class

how they could use their knowledge to write a persuasive but not instructional text. Very effective teaching guided pupils to achieve outstanding outcomes, producing very good descriptions.

- The quality of mathematics teaching is not as consistently good as that of reading and writing. Teachers are not as confident and do not always provide opportunities for pupils to work out problems that they might encounter in real life or to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Classrooms are well set out with pupils' work on display, challenges to stretch thinking and plenty of support for learning as well as good learning walls which pupils use as reference points when doing their work.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Teachers and teaching assistants take time to consider the learning needs of each individual pupil and design programmes to match their ability levels.
- Marking of pupils' work is most effective in English and mathematics; it helps pupils to learn and to improve their work. However, the standard is not consistently applied in the marking of all subjects across the school and pupils are not reminded of the standards they have reached in their literacy and numeracy.
- Homework provides good support for the work in class books through challenges in their topic work. Homework receives enthusiastic response from the pupils and is supported with an after school homework club. Pupils take pride in their work and presentation is generally of a high standard.
- Teaching for pupils in the nurture provision is well-planned, taking into account pupils' difficulties and how they learn effectively. Teaching is demonstrated effectively and pupils' learning is consolidated. Social skills are well-taught and moral issues are integrated well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Generally pupils are particularly keen to learn in lessons. They participate well, and work on their own, or with others, without fuss, maintaining their effort, concentration and enthusiasm. This is because most lessons are interesting and engaging. Lessons are rarely disrupted due to bad behaviour. Occasionally, a few become restless and less attentive when they are not sure about their learning.
- Behaviour at lunchtime, around the school and on the playground, is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. Behaviour is managed well by all staff and this contributes to positive learning in most lessons. Pupils and staff agree that pupils' behaviour is good.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation, including the importance of being safe on the internet. They are aware of bullying but say that it is extremely rare in the school. They know who they would go to if there were any concerns and say that, if there are any incidents, they are dealt with effectively by the school staff. Occasional incidents of name-calling are addressed effectively.
- Parents and staff who contributed their views during the inspection were very positive about the school and about pupils' behaviour and interest in learning. They say that their children feel safe,

are well looked after and are very happy at the school.

- The school has recorded very few racist or bullying incidents in recent years. Pupils' use of language that others might find offensive is extremely rare.
- The school has focused on improving attendance, working hard with the attendance officer in the school, who works with families. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Pupils are rarely late for school and there have been no exclusions of pupils from school in the past year.
- The breakfast club has a positive impact on pupils' learning. It provides a healthy breakfast and opportunities for pupils to socialise with their friends and take part in interesting activities.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has built a strong leadership team which is driving forward improvement. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the much-improved governing body who have been very much involved in challenging teaching and learning.
- The headteacher challenges inadequate performance which has resulted in improving the quality of teaching. Disappointing results at the end of Year 6 in 2013 have been successfully addressed. Through established procedures to manage teachers' performance, he has tackled the underperformance in teaching across the school so that standards are rising and the school is on course to exceed those of 2013 in both Keys Stage 1 and 2.
- Teaching is observed regularly by the headteacher. Staff with responsibilities for coordinating literacy and numeracy have been reporting weekly to the headteacher and governors to check books and pupils' progress, ensuring that the school has a clear and accurate picture of its effectiveness. Any pupils in danger of falling behind are helped to catch up quickly. The current focus on accelerating progress in writing is proving successful.
- A rigorous audit of the school has been carried out and accurate evaluation of data identifies appropriate priorities and informs the school's improvement plan. The plan has had a positive impact leading to well-focused training for teachers. This has resulted, for example, in good teaching of phonics across the school, which in turn has sped up pupils' progress in both reading and writing. This has led to the school being recommended to help other schools develop their phonics teaching. Training in problem solving in mathematics is now helping teachers to provide a wider range of learning activities to develop pupils' mathematical skills.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that teachers' performance is closely linked to pupils' progress, school targets and salary progression.
- There is a new leadership structure with phase leaders and subject leaders who are increasingly taking on more work, although the subject leaders are not yet fully involved in developing teaching in their areas due to the school reviewing the new curriculum. They are tracking pupils' progress closely but have not yet started to evaluate the impact of teaching.
- New teachers have settled well into the life of the school because induction procedures are effective, routines and high expectations are well established including fortnightly monitoring, and there is a very strong team approach among all the staff.
- There are regular training opportunities, fostered by the headteacher, including working with the

partnership school especially in mathematics. However, there are missed opportunities to improve teachers' skills even further by sharing more widely the expertise demonstrated by the best teachers in the school.

- The curriculum is well suited to the range of pupils' needs. It is extended by activities that are offered after school. The school is highly committed to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. There is a strong sense of respect for different faiths and opportunities for pupils to experience different places of worship. Pupils take part in residential activities and they listen to experts of various sorts who visit the school. These experiences help pupils to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects.
- Funding for the pupil premium has been used for one-to-one and small-group support for pupils, and to buy books and equipment to support the teaching of mathematics and reading. Its impact is carefully monitored and eligible pupils are making good progress.
- The school has used money for funding sports to provide some specialist teaching from both sports coaches and the secondary school partnership for the pupils and professional development for the staff. It also funds additional sporting activities after school. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the after-school sports clubs which are having a positive impact on their health and well-being.
- Since the last inspection, the school has been well supported by local authority advisers in the development of assessment tracking, improvement in teaching and learning and appropriately in other areas such as human resources; and the partnership school to address the areas for improvement identified.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- Parents interviewed and through the school questionnaire state they are happy with the leadership and management and the vast majority would recommend the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes an enormous contribution to continually improving the school through their rigorous examination and analysis of the extensive information provided by the headteacher. Their weekly meetings with staff looking at pupil progress have been reduced to fortnightly meetings as achievement has improved. As a result, they have a clear picture of the school's performance, which they use very effectively to question and hold the leaders and teachers to account. They have established clear links between the headteacher's pay and school targets and ensure that this is also how the staff pay is awarded in order to improve the standards of teaching further.
 - Governors use the school's finances wisely which ensures that they can continue to invest in new resources as necessary. They understand well how additional funding from the pupil premium and for sport is used to ensure improvements for pupils. They fulfil their statutory duties and meet requirements for safeguarding.

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	134852
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	442588

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	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Crispin Barker
Headteacher	Martyn Lightwood
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2012
Telephone number	01952 387640
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