

Inspection of a good school: Millom Infant School

Lapstone Road, Millom, Cumbria LA18 4LP

Inspection date:

16 November 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to school. They enjoy playing with their friends. They said that their favourite thing is eating the delicious school dinners. Pupils across the school enjoy their weekly visits to the nearby woodland area. They especially like making dens for the mini-beasts that they find there.

Leaders want all pupils to achieve well. Pupils enjoy the learning that their teachers provide. They listen carefully and try hard in lessons. They are keen to answer questions and to take part in activities. In a few subjects, pupils do not learn as well as in others. This is because leaders have not planned the curriculum as carefully in those subjects.

Pupils behave well. Children in the Reception class learn how to follow the simple rules and routines. Older pupils move around school sensibly and quietly. They show respect to their teachers and to visitors.

Pupils feel safe. They trust their teachers to look after them. Pupils know that bullying is wrong. They told inspectors that it does not happen often. They said that teachers would stop it if ever it did happen.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum that leaders have planned covers a broad range of subjects. All pupils learn from this broad curriculum, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders know what they want pupils to achieve in each subject by the time they move on to the junior school. This information is outlined in the curriculum plans.

The curriculums in some subjects are clearly organised. For example, in reading and in mathematics, leaders have decided the most important knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. Curriculum plans in these subjects show the order in which pupils need to learn this knowledge, from early years to Year 2. This helps pupils to build up and remember their knowledge securely over time.

Pupils revisit what they have learned in earlier lessons. For example, children in the Reception class practise using their new number knowledge to count objects. Pupils in Year 2 practise counting forwards and backwards in 10s. These opportunities help pupils to remember important knowledge. When teachers introduce new learning, they check regularly in lessons to make sure pupils have understood.

In other subjects, there is less information about the important knowledge leaders want pupils to learn. This makes it more difficult for leaders and teachers to check that pupils learn and remember everything that they should in those subjects. Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not had recent training to develop their expertise. This prevents them from checking how well pupils are learning the curriculum. This hinders their achievement and readiness to tackle the challenges of the key stage 2 curriculum.

Pupils enjoy reading. They have favourite books and look forward to story time with their teachers. As soon as children start school in the early years, they begin to learn about phonics. They learn new sounds each day and keep practising the ones that they already know. This helps them to learn how to read more and more words. Staff provide extra help to any children who fall behind. This helps them to catch up quickly. Sometimes, pupils find the words in their reading books too difficult. This happens when their reading books contain the letters and sounds they have not yet learned.

Leaders work with staff to identify those pupils who may have SEND. They make careful adaptations to learning where necessary. These adaptations help pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as other pupils. Leaders work with a range of professionals to ensure these pupils receive expert help when they need it. Pupils with SEND learn as well as their classmates.

Leaders provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop personally. For example, pupils learn about their own community through visits to the local shops and the museum. They learn about important events such as Remembrance Sunday. All pupils can take part in the after-school clubs for cookery, craft, gardening and multi-skills.

Governors know the school well. They ask leaders for a range of information to check how well pupils are achieving. Governors and leaders are mindful of staff's workload when they make decisions about how the school should run. Staff said that they appreciate the support they receive.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that the curriculums in art and design, geography and history would usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have a range of safeguarding training. Staff understand how to recognise signs of abuse. They know what action to take if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders work with a wide range of professionals to make sure pupils get the help that they need. For example, leaders work with other local schools and with the local authority to make sure they have the information they need to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading books that leaders provide contain words that some pupils find difficult to read. This is because the books are not matched closely enough to the letters and sounds that pupils have learned. This hampers pupils' ability to become confident and fluent readers. Leaders need to make sure that pupils are given reading books that are based on the sounds and letters they have learned well, so that they experience success in their reading.
- In some subjects, curriculum plans do not contain enough information about the knowledge leaders want pupils to learn. This prevents pupils from learning all of the important knowledge they need. It stops them being as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they could be. Leaders must ensure that curriculum plans contain enough information about the knowledge that pupils need to learn to achieve well in those subjects.
- Subject leaders, especially those new to their roles, have not had training in leading their subjects. This limits their ability to check the impact of the curriculum in their subject on pupils' learning. Leaders must ensure that all subject leaders have the training they need to lead their subject effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 112159 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 10199694 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 74 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Anthony Gilmore |
| Headteacher | Deborah Wilson |
| Website | www.millom-inf.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 22 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed to the school. The school is currently being led by an acting headteacher during the temporary absence of the substantive headteacher.
- The school offers a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the acting headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed documentation, which included the leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers in their responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in their free-text comments. They also considered responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils about school life and met with leaders and pupils to discuss provision for pupils' personal development and pupils' behaviour. The inspectors looked at documentation associated with these areas.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff to discuss leaders' support for them.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nick Capron

Ofsted Inspector

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