

Inspection of Mills Hill Primary School

Baytree Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL9 0NH

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. They are happy to feel part of a caring school family. They try their best to live up to leaders' high expectations for their behaviour and achievement. In all areas of school life, the staff encourage pupils to model the school's values of 'aspire, care and enquire'.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They told inspectors that there have been a small number of incidents of bullying in school. They said that sometimes other pupils make mean comments. However, they explained that staff deal with such incidents fairly and help to make sure it does not happen again. Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons.

Many pupils take part in a range of clubs and activities on offer before and after school. Some pupils go above and beyond and attend the cross-country club on a Saturday morning. Older pupils take on a range of additional responsibilities. They can become members of the school council or reading ambassadors.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), leave Year 6 ready for the challenges of high school.

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

Leaders have planned a broad, appropriately ambitious, and interesting curriculum for pupils, including children in the early years. In many subjects, leaders ensure that teachers have the expertise and support necessary to deliver curriculum plans effectively. However, in some subjects, leaders have introduced improved curriculum plans recently. They have not checked on how well teachers deliver these curriculums to inform training and guidance for staff. In these subjects, there are times when some teachers do not plan learning that helps pupils to know and remember the intended curriculum as well as they could.

In most subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils and children in the early years to learn. This helps teachers to design learning that builds on what pupils know already. Teachers use assessment effectively to check that pupils are secure with earlier learning before they move on to new ideas. Typically, pupils develop their knowledge across the curriculum and achieve well. That said, in those subjects where leaders have not identified knowledge as clearly, teachers' checks on pupils' learning are less effective. From time to time, this hinders pupils from building on what they know already.

Teachers receive appropriate training to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND benefit from appropriate support. Pupils with SEND are supported well by staff

to access the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders have suitable arrangements in place to adeptly identify the needs of this group of pupils.

Across year groups, teachers select books to read that pupils find appealing. Pupils enjoy reading both fiction and non-fiction books. They make the most of the wide range of reading resources available to them.

Leaders have refined their approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Pupils learn new sounds in a logical order. Staff have received appropriate training to deliver this curriculum well. They support those pupils who fall behind in their reading to catch up with their peers. Staff make sure that children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read books that match their reading ability. Pupils quickly acquire the skills and knowledge that they need to become confident and fluent readers.

Most children settle into the early years quickly. Leaders have established positive routines for behaviour in the Nursery class. These expectations are embedded further as pupils move through the school. Learning is seldom disrupted by poor behaviour and pupils can concentrate on their work.

Teachers plan opportunities to enrich pupils' personal development. All pupils engage in a range of fundraising activities for local and national charities. In addition, they have worked with the local train station on a project to improve access for people with physical disabilities. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. They know and appreciate the need to be respectful and tolerant of the views of others. Leaders ensure that pupils are aware of the need to look after their own physical and mental health.

Members of the governing body know the school well. They provide leaders with appropriate levels of support and challenge. For example, governors check carefully on how well disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND achieve. Governors ask leaders probing questions about curriculum developments.

Staff are very positive about working at the school. They appreciate that leaders make them feel valued. Staff speak highly of the care that leaders provide to them, ensuring their well-being is given the highest priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. This means that staff remain alert to potential signs of harm or abuse. Leaders work with a range of specialist agencies to ensure that vulnerable families are supported in a relevant and timely manner.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Recently, older pupils have benefited from lessons on how to cycle on the roads safely. Pupils are aware of ways they can keep themselves safe while online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In those subjects where curriculums have recently been introduced, leaders have not checked on how well teachers deliver curriculum content. On occasion, this prevents some teachers from gaining the support that they need to use these plans to design learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers benefit from the help that they need to select pedagogical approaches that support pupils to know and remember more over time.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This means that, from time to time, teachers' checks on pupils' learning are less effective, and this hinders pupils in building on earlier learning. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, they identify the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This will support teachers to design learning that builds on what pupils know already.

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

Unique reference number	105648
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10199405
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	651
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eddie Moores
Headteacher	Ian Mason
Website	www.millshill.oldham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 April 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- Most teachers, including the headteacher, have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Most members of the governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector met with four members of the

governing body, including the chair of the governors. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day. They considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, including the free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted’s pupils’ survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation. They checked on leaders’ systems for safer recruitment. Inspectors spoke with staff to check how well they understood their safeguarding duties.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about behaviour. They also observed pupils’ behaviour at play times and in lessons.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff about workload and well-being.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography, history and physical education. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, and spoke with teachers. Inspectors spoke with pupils and reviewed samples of their work. In addition, inspectors considered curriculum planning across a range of other subject areas.
- The lead inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to trusted adults.

Inspection team

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