

Inspection of Millbrook Infant School

Churchill Way, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 5BZ

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

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 15 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 inspections, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and so reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Millbrook is a positive and nurturing school. Pupils are proud to attend. They enjoy working with their friends in class and at social times on the playground. They enjoy learning new things. They say that teachers do everything they can to help them. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Pupils are welcoming and inclusive. They know that everyone is special and should be treated equally. Relationships between adults and pupils are consistently positive. Staff model how they want pupils to behave. Pupils follow this lead.

Pupils know the school's values. They see respect, kindness, safety, honesty, determination and independence as important. They know how these help them to work hard and be a good friend.

Pupils behave well. They understand the school's rules and know what happens if anyone misbehaves. They are proud of the roles that they carry out, such as those of playground pals and monitors. They relish the rewards and recognition that they can earn. Being a 'star of the week' is held in high esteem. Pupils enthusiastically explained that this means having lunch with the headteacher and enjoying an extended playtime.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They know what to do should it occur, although bullying is rare.

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

There are many strengths in the school's curriculum. The majority of subjects are well planned and sequenced. They set out precisely what pupils should learn at each stage of their education. They make clear the most important information that pupils are expected to know and remember. The curriculum is taught well. Pupils' recall of previous learning is impressive. They can talk about what they have learned accurately and fluently. However, in a small number of subjects, this is not yet the case. These subjects are planned, but do not yet make clear the precise content that pupils should know and remember at each stage. Leaders are in the process of addressing this.

A new phonics programme has been introduced recently. It is working well. The programme makes clear the sounds that pupils should know, week by week. Phonics is taught consistently well. Teachers' assessments are frequent and accurate. Pupils who need help to keep up are supported the same day. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they know. This means that pupils soon begin to read fluently.

Children enjoy their time in early years. Teachers help children to improve their language and communication skills. The environment is bright and engaging. Children work cooperatively and make the most of the activities on offer. However,

the early years curriculum does not set out precisely enough the things that children should know and be able to do at each point of their time in the Reception Year. This means that teachers are not able to help children learn the curriculum as systematically as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well in lessons. They get the help they need to learn the full curriculum. The new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) checks on how well pupils with SEND are supported in class. However, some of the targets that are set for these pupils are not precise enough. This means that staff are not clear about the progress that is required, nor how improvements will be measured.

The school's curriculums for relationships education and health education and religious education are well planned and sequenced. These help pupils to develop an appreciation of a wide range of views, beliefs and religions from around the world. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for.

The transition from one substantive headteacher to the next is being managed well. The interim senior leaders have ensured stability in this period of change. They have ensured that the school has continued to improve its curriculum. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The handover to the next headteacher is working well.

The governing body is ambitious for the pupils of the school. It has a good grasp of how the school is getting on. Governors provide leaders with the right level of challenge and support. Working alongside the local authority, they have secured continuity of effective leadership.

Effective support from the local authority has resulted in improvements to the curriculum, leadership and governance. The local authority remains committed to supporting the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the schools' safeguarding procedures well. They quickly pass on any concerns to leaders. Leaders follow these up robustly. Safeguarding leaders regularly check that pupils are getting the help and support that they need. The family support worker provides a wide range of help and advice that parents and carers value.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know what to do if they are worried or upset. They know that they can use their 'safety hands' to ask for help. They understand online risks and know that people might not be who they appear to be.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not yet make clear the most important things that pupils need to know at each stage of their education. This means that pupils do not learn and remember the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum, across all subjects, makes clear the most important things that pupils need to know and remember at each stage of their education.
- The early years curriculum does not set out precisely enough the things that children should know and be able to do at each point of their time in the Reception Year. This means that staff are unable to check how well children are acquiring and remembering the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum sets out precisely the things that children should know and be able to do at each point of their time in the Reception Year.
- Pupils with SEND get the help that they need to access the curriculum. However, some of the targets that are set for these pupils are not precise enough. This means that staff are not clear about the progress that is required, nor how improvements will be measured. Leaders should ensure that targets for pupils with SEND are clear and measurable.

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	122108
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10199372
Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dominic Peverell
Headteacher	Wendy Thorne (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.millbrook-inf.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of this inspection, there was an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher in post.
- A newly appointed headteacher will take up post from the summer term 2022.
- The chair of governors is new to post.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the early years leader and the SENCo.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: reading, mathematics, religious education, art, and design and technology. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation for physical education, relationships education, health education, music and geography.
- The lead inspector met three representatives of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. He also met with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 45 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and 29 written comments from parents. Inspectors spoke informally to parents outside the school. They also considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors met with safeguarding leaders. They reviewed school documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and quality assurance work carried out by the school.

Inspection team

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