

# Inspection of a good school: Millbrook Junior School

Churchill Way, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 5DP

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

## **Outcome**

Millbrook Junior School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud of their welcoming school. They respect their helpful and caring teachers. Year 6 pupils explained that the school has 'filled their backpacks', so they feel well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils benefit from experiences and visits to interesting places to help them learn more. They appreciate the opportunities to develop their interests in sport and music. They are interested in what happens in the world around them. They value the opportunities to set their own learning goals. Pupils are conscientious in taking on different responsibilities, such as being head pupils, subject team members or eco-team members.

Pupils behave well. They aim to 'be ready' and use the 'Millbrook five hands' to consider the choices they make to achieve their best. They are proud to receive praise and notes home for 'going above and beyond'. They say that bullying is rare and that adults help them to resolve any fallings out they may have.

Leaders set high expectations. Adults work as a team to provide a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils enjoy learning about interesting ideas and facts. Staff help pupils to learn from their mistakes and to remember more over time in all subjects.

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

Leaders want the best education for every pupil. Leaders have identified the most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to know in all subjects. This helps staff to ensure that pupils learn and remember more across subjects.

The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have continued to have a severe impact on the pupils in this school. Leaders have accurately identified what they need to do to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. They have refined the English and mathematics curriculum to address this. Subject leaders are supporting colleagues with increased accuracy. Pupils are

now improving their fluency and confidence and achieving better. The impact of these changes is not yet consistently seen in published outcomes at the end of key stage 2. Nevertheless, pupils are now progressing well through the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that reading is always a priority. Leaders have carefully chosen the range of books that pupils study. Pupils talk confidently about the books they study. Leaders are determined to support pupils who need more help to read fluently. They link their support to what pupils have learned at their previous school.

In mathematics, teachers follow an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This enables them to spot pupils' errors or misconceptions. Teachers use regular assessment checks. These quickly identify any mathematical knowledge that pupils need to revisit. Consequently, pupils feel confident and enjoy mathematics.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn increasingly sophisticated vocabulary across all subjects. Teachers help them to remember and connect what they learn. As a result, pupils' confidence in explaining their understanding increases as they move through school.

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil across the school. They have ensured that they accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Careful and sensitive support helps pupils to improve their self-regulation and be ready to learn alongside their peers. However, pupils are not always well supported to achieve the curriculum aims. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not make as much academic progress as they could.

Leaders prioritise pupils' mental health and physical well-being. Leaders have ensured that pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils learn to respect difference. They learn about different beliefs and family structures. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships. They are being prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Most parents appreciate that their children are happy and safe at school. Leaders continue to consider the best ways to communicate with parents.

Staff appreciate the way that governors and senior leaders regularly check on their well-being and listen to them. They appreciate the range of training provided by the school. Staff value the strong team ethos at Millbrook.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure pupils' well-being comes first. Leaders know pupils and families well. Leaders work effectively with other agencies. When necessary, leaders are tenacious in securing appropriate support.

Leaders ensure staff are well trained. Staff know to share any concern because it could be important. Recruitment and induction processes are thorough.

Pupils say they feel safe because adults listen to them and help. Pupils learn how to stay safe in different situations, including online. Year 6 pupils feel prepared for changes they may face, including going to secondary school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some of the actions leaders are now taking to improve pupils' achievement are recent. They are not yet consistently realised in published outcomes for pupils. Leaders must build on the improved granularity and rigour of their monitoring and evaluation. They should continue to improve the implementation of the curriculum, so pupils achieve as highly as they can.
- Some pupils with SEND, and some pupils who are not achieving age-related expectations, do not consistently receive the precise adaptations and support they need to quickly close gaps in their learning. This does not help pupils to make as much progress as they could. Leaders should ensure that pupils who need additional help receive precise support to enable them to optimise their academic achievement.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2017.

## **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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122109
<b>Local authority</b>	North Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10254944
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	429
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Danielle Warren
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.millbrookjuniors.co.uk">www.millbrookjuniors.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other leaders. A meeting was held with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including school policies.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered leaders' curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also met with other subject leaders and looked at curriculum documentation and samples of pupils' work for some other subjects.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils. Pupils' behaviour was considered at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school and at lunchtime.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspector met with safeguarding leaders, spoke with a range of staff and pupils and considered safeguarding records.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the pupil survey and the staff survey. The inspector spoke informally to parents at the end of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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