



Millfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104203
LEA Walsall
Inspection number 277099
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Lois Furness AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Catshill Road
School category	Community		Brownhills
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Walsall, West Midlands WS8 6BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 452513
Number on roll	220	Fax number	01543 454516
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr P J Bispham

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides good value for money. When pupils leave in Year 6, they attain broadly average standards overall and achievement is good. The school made a cautious evaluation of its own effectiveness, evaluating it as satisfactory. This is because it recognises that pupils make more progress in some classes than in others. In Nursery and Reception the quality of education and standards is good overall. Teaching and learning are good with strengths in the relationships between adults and pupils. This results in pupils who are happy to come to school. They enjoy their education and behaviour is good. The curriculum is good with a good range of enrichment activities which contribute effectively to pupils' enjoyment of school. Support, care and guidance are good. Pupils feel safe and confident there is someone to talk to if they are worried or concerned. However, pupils do not consistently receive sufficient guidance about how they might improve the quality of their work. Leadership and management are good but the good expertise of key subject leaders, including the Foundation Stage leader, is underused in making teaching even better.

The key issues of the previous inspection have been rectified well and standards have improved. This, combined with the willingness to try new approaches to improve learning, shows the school has good capacity to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and how they might improve their work.
- Involve key subject leaders, including the Foundation Stage leader, more in working alongside colleagues to share good practice and to help them to become better practitioners.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good overall. When pupils leave in Year 6, they attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows good achievement from when children first start at school in the Nursery. However, because of more effective teaching in some year groups, progress varies. The school has responded well to this variation, providing both support and effective action, such as a more structured method of teaching reading for Foundation Stage children and Years 1 and 2 pupils. These actions have resulted in improved standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are close to those expected for their age and their achievement is good. Grouping Years 3 to 6 pupils by ability rather than by age for aspects of literacy and mathematics has proved to be another effective strategy resulting in improving standards and achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in their learning because of effective support. Targets were narrowly missed in 2005 but the pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to meet the challenging targets set for 2006.

Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception. By the time children enter Year 1 the majority of them are close to the goals expected for their age in most areas of learning and achievement is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. They have thoughtful, responsible attitudes towards their learning. They behave well in lessons and around school, enjoy the full range of school activities and are keen to do their best. Attendance is satisfactory overall. A good effort is made by the school to encourage parents to ensure their children attend regularly. This has led to satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, there is a minority of parents who do not ensure their children's regular attendance.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to live a safe and healthy lifestyle. They know the importance of taking regular exercise and are keen to make healthy food choices. They respond sensibly to opportunities to take responsibility both within school and the local community. Good progress in basic skills and growing confidence and independence helps to prepare pupils well for the next stage of education and life in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are caring. Pupils are attentive and work hard in an atmosphere that encourages learning. Most teaching is matched closely to pupils' needs and support is placed accurately to ensure that pupils improve. This is particularly strong in Reception and in Years 5 and 6. In these classes, teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and good questioning skills. These skills are used effectively to accelerate learning. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants and external agencies.

The use of targets to help pupils to improve the quality of their work is developing, but is inconsistent. The best marking of pupils' work, particularly of their writing, is sharply focused on the next step in learning, but this is not the case in all subjects or classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets national requirements and is successfully adapted to meet pupils' needs. Pupils benefit from the additional element of an introductory course in Spanish. The curriculum for the Nursery and Reception children is good but

the lack of a secure outside area restricts opportunities for the development of the outdoor curriculum. Programmes of work in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are innovative and thoughtfully planned. Physical education has a strong place in the curriculum and exploits well the school's possession of its own swimming pool. Well designed activities help develop pupils' good personal and social skills and an understanding of how to be healthy and safe. A good range of educational visits and visitors, together with optional club activities outside lesson time, strongly contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Procedures for health and safety including child protection are good and thoroughly applied. There is good awareness of potential risks and careful preventative checks are made regularly. The response to the parent questionnaire shows that parents are pleased with the care and support given to their children. Effective procedures are in place to prevent and tackle bullying. Pupils say that occasional minor upsets are resolved quickly and fairly. They speak highly of the help they receive and are comfortable sharing any worries that they may have with the adults in the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who are vulnerable are effectively supported. Outside agencies including social services, the school nurse and the local health authority are used well to support pupils' needs. Good assessment systems including tracking systems are in place. However, guidance to pupils about their next learning targets is not always clear.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership, ably supported by key members of staff, provides clear direction for the school's work. Inclusion is high on the agenda and all pupils are involved well in the range of activities that are provided. There are good arrangements for gaining and acting on the views of pupils and their parents.

Governors are supportive and know the strengths and areas requiring improvement. They question carefully why initiatives are introduced, for example that for improving pupils' reading skills. However, the lack of clear success criteria in the school development plan means they are not able to fully evaluate the success of this good initiative. Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory. The school uses outside specialist support to identify accurately strengths and development areas. However, full use is not made of the good expertise of the English, mathematics and science subject leaders or of the leader of the Foundation Stage in supporting the improvement of identified weaknesses or in modelling good classroom practice.

Improvement since the previous inspection is good. The leadership is very willing to implement different effective ways of improving pupils' learning and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school and for talking to us about your work. We found out that there are lots of good things and also some things that would make your school even better. These are the good things

You work hard and make good progress in your learning from when you first start at school in the Nursery to when you leave in Year 6.

You enjoy coming to school and behave well both in lessons and when outside at play.

You are well cared for. You know that staff listen to your concerns and want to help you.

You try hard to keep healthy and know the importance of regular exercise.

These are the things to make your school even better

We have asked your teachers to give you more guidance about what is good about your work and how you might make it even better.

Some of your teachers have lots of good ideas about how to make learning better. So we have asked your headteacher to let them work more with other teachers to share their good ideas.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Millfield Primary School an even better place to be.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L A Furness Lead Inspector