



# Millbrook Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106436  
**LEA** Wigan  
**Inspection number** 277560  
**Inspection dates** 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Paul Bamber CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Elmfield
<b>School category</b>	Community		Shevington
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Wigan, Lancashire WN6 8DL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01257 404552
<b>Number on roll</b>	193	<b>Fax number</b>	01257 404698
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr G Billings
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gabrielle Gray

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277560
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average-sized school that serves a wide catchment area and has children on roll from mixed social backgrounds. There are a lower than average proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, from minority ethnic backgrounds or who join or leave the school at times other than normal transfer times. No children speak English as an additional language.

## **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 with outstanding features, providing good value for money. This judgement is in line with the school's own view. It is a school that has improved considerably over the last two years because of strong leadership by the headteacher and governors, and an effective partnership with the local authority. Significant improvements over that time in overall standards and particularly in the achievements of more-able pupils mean that standards are now above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. This is because the quality of the care, guidance and support they receive is excellent. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils have very positive and mature attitudes to school. The curriculum is good and increasingly effective in matching the needs of all pupils. Because the quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding, pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in developing those basic academic and life skills that will prepare them well for the future. However, the assessment of pupils' progress and standards in those subjects other than the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) lacks rigour. In the Reception class, the quality of teaching and of the curriculum is good and often very good; as a result, children achieve well and reach above expected standards.

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher is most effective but until very recently middle managers have been less so, especially in influencing higher standards and achievement. The school has a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses that enables it to plan for continuous improvement, in which it has a good recent record.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all managers are more effective in checking on how well pupils are achieving and learning and in helping staff perform even better.
- More rigorously assess pupils' skills, standards and progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement of all pupils is good throughout the school. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average standards and, because of a stimulating curriculum and good teaching, support and assessment, they make good progress in all aspects of their learning. Many enter Year 1 exceeding the targets set for them nationally. They continue to progress well in Years 1 and 2 where there have been notable improvements in the achievements of more-able pupils, especially in writing which is an intensive school focus. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables all pupils to continue to achieve well so that by the time they take Year 6 national tests they attain significantly above average standards. As in Key Stage 1, over the last two

years, more-able pupils have achieved much better in the Year 6 tests. Boys have tended to achieve better than boys nationally because the school has worked hard to better meet their needs as readers and writers. The challenging targets set by the school have been met well recently and indications are that the current Year 6 will reach those set for 2006. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the outstanding care and support they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school has been modest in judging it to be good. Pupils think very highly of their school and really enjoy their learning. They are highly motivated by the stimulating teaching and challenging activities set in lessons and they like the way that teachers make learning fun. One pupil said, 'teachers are nice, they are firm but kind, and make sure you understand what you have to do.' Impressive features are the very high levels of self-confidence displayed by pupils and the way in which they work together amicably and cooperatively on shared tasks. This is because of the excellent relationships they enjoy with adults and with each other. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, courteous and eager to talk to visitors. Attendance rates are high.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely good. They have a good understanding of different religions and cultures. Pupils create class rules and clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and know how to keep safe. They are strongly encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils very willingly accept responsibility and are cheerful, polite and helpful. Their positive attitudes and high level of basic skills equip them well for future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. This has a very positive impact on pupils' standards and achievement. Where lessons are outstanding, teachers use information from assessment rigorously to plan in detail what pupils will learn. They set high expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work, explaining clearly what they expect pupils to do. Pupils very much enjoy learning, reporting that, 'lessons are not boring and teachers involve us a lot'. Most teachers use marking well to help pupils know how they can improve. A most positive feature of pupils' learning is how much they participate in lessons and seize every opportunity to be independent, to work cooperatively and to learn from each other. Teachers encourage pupils to use ICT frequently and productively to support their learning. Effective specialist teaching in music and science makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievements. A relative weakness in teaching is the lack of rigorous assessment in subjects other

than the core subjects. This means that teachers have insufficient information with which to match tasks to pupils' ability. Overall, teaching assistants are effective and provide vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities valuable support that contributes well to their good progress. However, on occasions they are not always used as productively as they could at the beginning of lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of pupils well. The Foundation Stage curriculum presents a wide range of stimulating practical experiences to the children and gives close attention to the recommended areas of learning. Throughout the school, appropriate emphasis is placed on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Provision for ICT is very good. Pupils use computers confidently and apply their skills well in other subjects. Pupils are presented with a rich diet of interesting and challenging experiences and take full advantage of the many enriching activities on offer. These experiences are very effectively augmented by a large number of visits, including residential visits, and the many visitors to the school. A wide range of after-school activities is provided and provision for sport is good. Careful attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of the need to stay healthy, take regular exercise and avoid the risks that they may face as they get older.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. This is a very caring school where everyone matters. Health and safety and child protection procedures are very well organised. Pupils feel highly valued and respected and are keen to articulate their opinions. They like their teachers and go to them if they need help. Parents feel very welcome in school and are encouraged to become involved in their children's education. They are very pleased with the attention given to ensuring that their children settle quickly into school and the good arrangements for their transfer to secondary school.

Pupils' academic progress in the core subjects is carefully monitored and arrangements for setting targets are well organised. Pupils know how well they are doing because teachers mark their work carefully and make good use of comments to help the children make improvements to their work. As one child said, 'teachers make comments when marking your work that tell you what needs doing to improve your work.' As a result, they make very good progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. Together with the governors and the local authority, she has have worked diligently and successfully to improve standards, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and to overcome resistance to change. The very

recently appointed, capable and enthusiastic leadership team has already effected some improvements in teaching and learning and in the curriculum but has had too little time to make an impact on raising standards and achievement even higher. Until very recently, middle managers have been largely ineffective in influencing improvements. Much more rigorous systems to check performance have been introduced and have had a considerable impact in raising pupils' and teachers' standards. The school works successfully to include all pupils fully in its provision and high quality procedures ensure pupils' excellent safety, health and personal development. Very productive links with other schools, the local authority, the local community and with parents contribute well to many aspects of pupils' achievements. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good which results in them achieving well. In the Foundation Stage, leadership and management are effective and this has been acknowledged by an external assessor. The governing body is strong, putting its whole weight behind the headteacher's drive for improvements and by being fully involved in strategic planning. Parents rightly think highly of this over-subscribed school and of the very effective headteacher. The school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve and is well placed 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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2	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	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 for making us so welcome during the day we spent in your school. We really appreciated the open way in which you chatted to us and let us know so many interesting things about your school. We would like to share with you those things we thought were really good about your school and those things we felt it could do a little bit better.

What we liked most about your school:

- you get so involved in lessons and in other activities in school
- you do so well in your work
- you behave maturely and are really friendly to each other and to visitors
- you have good teachers who try really hard to help you do well and to become good young citizens
- you have a very good headteacher who has made many improvements and knows what to do to make the school even better.

Although we think your school is good there are a couple of things that we feel would make it even better:

- teachers should have a better idea about how you are getting on in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT
- those teachers who help to run the school should do a bit more to help the headteacher.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to really enjoy school and do very well with your work and carry on trying really hard.