



Mill Lane Junior Infant and Early Years School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 107639
LEA Kirklees
Inspection number 277793
Inspection dates 3 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Bob Thompson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mill Lane
School category	Community		Batley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Yorkshire WF17 6EG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 326724
Number on roll	146	Fax number	01924 326724
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs H Megahy
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Smith

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Mill Lane is a smaller than average school, with more boys than girls, in an area of some social deprivation. Twenty nursery children attend in the mornings. An average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is three times the national average; those whose first language is not English is four times the average. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupil mobility is high in some classes. The school has a local authority 'Healthy Dinners Gold Award'. Recent building work, due to be completed by September 2006, has resulted in pupils having to move classrooms frequently, sometimes into temporary accommodation.

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 some outstanding features, a judgement which matches the school's own view. It is also a happy school where pupils enjoy their learning. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. The outstanding headteacher leads an effective team who are committed to working for the benefit of all the pupils. A comment from the parental questionnaires typifies parents' views: 'A fully inclusive school, encompassing many cultures.' The huge commitment of all staff shows in the standards of work produced by the pupils and the progress they make. Good quality provision in the Foundation Stage ensures the children have a good start to their schooling. All pupils make good progress throughout the school and reach standards that are above the national average by the end of Year 6. Even though all pupils make good progress, the school is not complacent and recognises that higher attaining pupils could do better in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Standards in writing, particularly the boys', could be improved by the end of Year 2. The consistent quality of teaching and learning and a good, relevant curriculum encourage the pupils to behave very well and become confident, responsible learners who achieve well. The school takes excellent care of the pupils and high quality academic guidance and support ensures the pupils feel safe and know exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Consequently, parents have a high regard for the school and the education it provides. Governance is very good and the skills and expertise of the governors are used effectively to challenge and support the school as it moves forwards. The school has improved well since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenge in mathematics and science lessons for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Raise the quality of writing by the end of Year 2, particularly that of the boys.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When they start school, children have basic skills which are below those found nationally. They make good progress in English, mathematics and science, so that by the time they reach the end of Year 6 they achieve standards which are above the national average. Pupils who receive bilingual support make significant progress. Through rigorous monitoring, the school has identified that pupils could do better in their writing by the end of Year 2, particularly the boys. By the end of Year 6 pupils are doing better in English than in mathematics and science, based on 2005 results. The school has identified the need to challenge the more able pupils to achieve the higher levels in national tests. Good strategies have been put in place to iron out these differences. The performance of different groups, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and the more

able, has been well analysed and appropriate work provided. The result of these strategies is that progress overall is good. The unvalidated data for 2006 suggests improvements are under way. Currently, the performance of boys in their writing and the performance of the older, more able pupils are being targeted. Children in the early years unit make good progress due to a broad and balanced curriculum and a stimulating environment. Parents appreciate what the school does, a typical comment being, 'I feel that my son has blossomed within the ethos of this small and nurturing community.'

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good with outstanding features. Pupils take great pleasure in their school and in doing their best in lessons and revel in the opportunities they have for learning. 'In this school we have fun as well as work hard,' a pupil said. Behaviour is good and pupils are happy and polite with each other and visitors. They value praise and rewards when they have tried hard and as a consequence, behave well. They clearly feel safe in school and confident that they can approach a member of staff to talk over any incident that bothers them. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary. Pupils are confident in putting their views in circle time and they appreciate and celebrate the rich diversity of the cultures in the school. The school works hard to encourage healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. Pupils develop good citizenship skills for the future through the work of the school council and consider that they make a good contribution to what is happening in school. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has been successful in reducing the number of families who want to take their children away on extended holidays in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is consistently good with some outstanding lessons. For example, in a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson the teacher built up confidence and self-esteem by continually telling pupils, 'there are no wrong answers'. As a result, they overflowed with ideas. Consequently, pupils learn well and make good progress. Improving basic skills of literacy and numeracy is a high priority and, where appropriate, they are developed in other subjects. All teachers use a variety of interesting activities to engage pupils and fuller use of the interactive whiteboards will be possible when the building work is completed. There are well established routines and praise is used effectively to create a positive, secure ethos where pupils achieve well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and challenge pupils' thinking through good question and answer sessions. Support staff, including bilingual staff, make a very positive contribution to pupils' progress. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and pupils make good progress. Marking is good: teachers celebrate

pupils' achievements and give effective guidance on how to improve. Regular assessments in mathematics, English and science are rigorous and accurate.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, providing well for different needs and cultural identities. Provision for pupils for whom English is a second language is excellent. Provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. Individual plans for these pupils are crisp, targets are regularly reviewed and skilled support staff are deployed effectively. The school has identified the need to make wider use of information and communication technology (ICT) and this will be possible when building work is completed. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is a strength. It provides practical support to pupils, making a valuable contribution to their health and well-being. Good links with the local and wider community have widened learning opportunities. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils go to a local high school for science and the school takes a lead role in creative arts. Pupils enjoy the skills and qualities brought by many visitors to the school and take part in a variety of visits including residential stays. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. Well planned activities ensure that children make an effective start to their school career.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils in the school is outstanding. The school is extremely effective in ensuring that there are watertight arrangements to safeguard pupils. These include risk assessments, rigorous checks to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children, and child protection procedures. Parents are especially appreciative of this and said they were 'impressed with the dedication of the staff to meeting the individual needs of all children in their care'. Arrangements for moving pupils onto the next stage of their education and for settling them into school when they first arrive are very well organized. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English receive exemplary provision to help them. Although pupils make good progress as a result of very good targeted academic support throughout the school, the school has identified the need to ensure more pupils reach the higher levels in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The 2006 unvalidated data suggests this is happening in science. Through Assessment for Learning, most pupils know their targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has built up an effective team of governors and staff to support her vision of a fully inclusive school where every child matters. This is developing well because of the headteacher's outstanding

leadership. Rigorous self-evaluation carried out by the senior leadership team and governors, including feedback from parents and pupils, results in information which gives an accurate view of how well the school is performing. This is used effectively to identify correct priorities for development, such as improving the standards reached by high attaining pupils and the need to improve writing by the end of Year 2. Performance management is well embedded in the school and is linked effectively to the school improvement plan and professional development for staff. Effective action is taken to tackle areas identified as being in need of improvement. The coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the core subjects are good and this good practice is being extended across all subjects. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. Through their reflective discussions about all aspects of the school's work they provide a very good balance of challenge and support. The headteacher and the school are held in high esteem by the parents. The school has improved well since the last inspection and is well placed to improve further. Key factors in this are the knowledge and enthusiasm of staff and their team work, working together for the greatest benefit of the pupils. This is why standards are continuing to rise across the school.

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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	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	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?	1	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	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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

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

As you know, I recently visited you to find out how well your school is helping you with your learning.

Thank you for being so friendly and willing to talk to me. It was useful to know what you think about your school. I did enjoy having lunch with you and listening to some good advice on 'healthy eating' and how much you enjoyed your clubs in school. Sorry I could not join you in your skipping after lunch.

There are some things that I think are really good about your school. These are:

- the good progress you make in your work and the enthusiasm you have for all your activities in school and your clubs
- the excellent care and support all pupils receive
- how well your headteacher and teachers know you so that they can plan exciting activities and lessons that will challenge you to improve even more
- your parents are happy with the school and all it does for you
- your behaviour is good and you are learning to be safe and have healthy lifestyles
- the atmosphere that learning is fun, and the harmony throughout the school.

I have asked your headteacher and teachers to think about making your school even better by:

- helping more of you to achieve the higher levels in mathematics and science before you leave school
- improving standards of writing by the end of Year 2, especially for the boys.