



# Millfields Primary School and Nursery

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111079  
**LEA** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 278592  
**Inspection dates** 17 October 2005 to 18 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Judith Clarke 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>	Marsh Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Nantwich
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Cheshire CW5 5HP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 625587
<b>Number on roll</b>	222	<b>Fax number</b>	01270 623743
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr N Ascroft
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr G Evans

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17 October 2005 - 18 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278592
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized school in a mixed social area. Almost all children are from a white British heritage. None of the children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The number of children known to be eligible for free school meals is average with the numbers of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities below average. The number of children with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above average. The children's skills on entry to the school are below the levels expected. Because of a recent increase in new housing in the area, the school has admitted large numbers of children into each year group. The school benefits from support from the local high school, which has specialist Performing Arts status.

## 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 strength of the school is the care and guidance that are available for the children. The children enjoy all that the school provides and their behaviour, attitudes to work and attendance are outstanding. The curriculum is rich and provides a wealth of interesting activities. Parents are confident in the care provided and comment positively on the supportive learning environment. Teaching is good. Attainment on entry is below the levels expected but the 2005 national test results show that the Year 6 children achieved standards above the national and local expectation. This is an improvement on the 2004 position where standards had fallen since 2003 and dipped to a position that was below average. There is a particular strength in the progress the children make in their art and design work and information and communication technology (ICT). The children make good progress. The school rightly considers that there is more to do throughout the school to improve the children's writing skills, especially in respect of the boys and the higher attaining children. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the extra help they receive in lessons, which enables them to learn.

The school is well led and managed and self-evaluation is accurate. The ethos of care in the school is outstanding; this is because of the drive and commitment of the headteacher and the teamwork of all staff. However, there is more to do in the monitoring of teaching and learning to spread good practice and expertise throughout the school. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

Focus on:

- raising achievement in writing especially for the higher attaining children and the boys
- establishing regular systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching to enable good practice and expertise to be shared.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards in the school have been adversely affected in the last two years by a number of key factors. Most important has been the significant numbers of children who have joined the school part-way through their schooling. This position has now stabilised and the school's data shows that standards are rising throughout the school.

Most children start their schooling in the Nursery class and transfer into the Reception class. On entry to the Reception class, children's skills range widely but are generally below average. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and by the end of the Reception Year most reach the levels expected.

Inspection evidence shows that children in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. The children reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although the spread of attainment is wide. The school's results for Year 6 children in the 2004 national tests were not strong, reflecting a below average position. Especially weak were the numbers of children reaching the higher than expected level in English; a major contributory factor was the significant number of pupils joining the school part way through their schooling. However, the preliminary 2005 test results for the Year 6 children show that they achieved higher standards than in 2004 and above those expected nationally and locally. Inspection evidence also shows that the children make good progress throughout the school and standards are rising. The school has correctly recognised that performance is better in mathematics and science than it is in writing. The school has identified that the boys and higher-attainers, in particular, need extra help with writing.

Standards in art and design and ICT are above those expected and reflect a good range of skills being taught and a firm commitment to a creative and expressive curriculum. Standards in ICT have risen since the last inspection and reflect the drive in the school for development. All children have challenging targets to work towards; this has improved since the last inspection. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in their lessons because the teachers are focused on improvement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children's personal development and well-being are good. Children are attentive in lessons and try their best. Children bubble with enthusiasm as they explain exactly what it is that makes this school special. A child reflected, 'The children are what I like most about this school - everyone's so kind. I love coming'. Outstanding attendance and impressive punctuality illustrate that most children agree. The school accepts nothing less and these good habits prepare them well for the world of work. Children are aware of the expectations all adults have of their behaviour and they do not disappoint. They agree there is no bullying or racism here. The cheery atmosphere is founded on excellent relationships nurtured by the headteacher.

Children have a well-developed sense of respect for the feelings of others and show sensitive understanding that everyone can shine at something. They happily celebrate these successes. At playtimes, older children show good teamwork as they sell milk as part of the thriving healthy eating initiative. Children show good familiarity with their local heritage, studying 'canal culture', for example. Children taste a variety of cultures through art and design, and religious studies. Even so, they do not learn enough about what it means to live in modern multicultural Britain.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The children's enjoyment of their learning is evident and they respond very well in their lessons and make good progress. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and activities are well matched to meet the needs of the children. The teachers are particularly aware of the need to ensure that the higher-attaining children and the boys are challenged with their learning and are interested and stimulated. ICT is used particularly well to engage children's interests. The youngest children in the school enjoy their activities and have great fun learning new things. They are confident and secure in their surroundings and learn happily. Older children are prepared to work hard and listen carefully to their teachers. The effective deployment of teaching assistants ensures that those children who have specific learning needs are well supported. Relationships throughout the school are outstanding and children respond well to the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour. Sometimes the introductions to lessons are overlong, which slows learning.

The children have very clear targets to work towards and these are regularly reviewed. The teachers know the children well, target questions carefully in lessons and make good use of praise. Teachers mark children's work rigorously and their helpful comments enable children to know exactly what it is they need to do next to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned to ensure enjoyment and achievement for all age groups. There are many after-school clubs to further children's interests, educational visits and visitors to the school. The residential visits in Year 2 and Year 6 provide special occasions for the children, encouraging healthy and varied life styles. Children talk knowledgeably about the healthy lunch options available. The very attractive school grounds provide both environmental and social opportunities for all.

A particular strength is the outstanding quality of the children's artwork displayed throughout the school. The school is successful in seeking to help children make more sense of what they are learning by planning lessons, which cross different subject areas. Older children can make choices on how they present their work and the increased use of ICT has helped develop writing. For example, using the computer Year 6 children have produced fantastic animated screenplays in the mode of 'Wallace and Gromit'.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The care in the school is outstanding. It is a place where every child matters. Adults who work in the school know the children very well. Staff review children's progress

regularly and maintain a very careful check on their personal development. Children say, very readily, that they feel safe at school, with no fear of being bullied or discriminated against. They trust the staff, and have great confidence that there is always someone they can turn to for help. A strong ethos of care permeates all aspects of school life. As a result, children are confident and successful learners. Child protection and health and safety procedures are fully in place. The vast majority of the parents are very supportive of the school and most of them feel that their children are extremely well cared for.

The school encourages the children to embrace healthy lifestyles. Children are made well aware of the dangers of drugs abuse and of the benefits of good hygiene and regular exercise.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher shows a clear commitment to the children in his care. A strong staff team shares his vision and all are committed to school improvement. School evaluation is accurate and priorities for development clear. The key coordinators have analysed data and the children's performance and have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They are rigorous and systematic in their planning for improvement. Consequently, all work with common aims and purpose. The monitoring of teaching, and sharing of good practice, is yet to be systematically developed and is an area for improvement. The school works closely with the local high school, which has specialist Performing Arts status, and as a result, teachers' expertise and children's standards have improved. The views of the children are sought and acted upon and the children play a significant part in the day-to-day running of the school. Parents recognise the high quality of care and the importance placed by the school on ensuring that children are safe. The school is responsive to parents' requests. Children's performance is regularly and carefully checked and resources are deployed well and used efficiently.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Governors have efficient systems in place; they are closely involved with the work of the school and are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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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>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	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	2	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	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

<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**

As you know, three inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to us. We really enjoyed talking to you about your work, looking at your books and speaking to your teachers and attending your assemblies.

What we like most about your school:

- Your warm and friendly welcome - it was a pleasure to visit
- You are polite and friendly to each other in the classroom and when playing outside
- Your behaviour in school is outstanding
- You work hard and enjoy all you do
- You have good lessons which help you to improve your work
- Your headteacher runs your school well; he listens to what you have to say and works hard to make changes
- Those of you who need a little extra help get it in the right sort of way
- We agree with your parents and carers that you go to a good school.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school even better. These are:

- To help you get better at your writing
- To check teaching in the school so that it gets even better.

We hope that you will continue to work hard in school and help the teachers so that Millfields becomes an even better school.