



Millfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124081
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281625
Inspection dates 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006
Reporting inspector David Cox AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Colehill Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Fazeley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Tamworth, Staffordshire B78 3RQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01827 475010
Number on roll	362	Fax number	01827 475010
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Jones
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Paul Moon

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Millfield Primary School is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties is broadly average. When children start school in Reception, many have the skills and knowledge typical of four-year-olds although a small minority of boys have poor writing skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education. This judgement matches the school's own analysis. Provision in Reception is satisfactory and, as a result of satisfactory teaching, many children achieve what they are expected to reach by the beginning of Year 1 although some boys still have weak writing skills. Boys' standards of writing continue to be a weakness in Years 1 to 6. This is because assessment data gathered on these boys is not always used to pitch tasks at the right level and provide tasks that they enjoy. The recently introduced schemes for improving boys' writing are not applied consistently by some teachers. Standards are average by the end of Year 6, and pupils achieve satisfactorily because teaching is satisfactory overall although there are examples of good teaching in all year groups. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the good support they receive. Pupils are well cared for and safe. The school goes to considerable lengths to ensure that all pupils are treated equally. The curriculum is good and as a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school and develop good personal skills. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Existing systems for monitoring the quality of teaching require more rigour to bring about the desired improvement in the progress made by some pupils. The school has largely addressed the issues identified at the last inspection although there is still a need to improve standards of writing for some pupils. Leaders have shown that they can move the school forward. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more effective and consistent use of the recently introduced schemes for improving boys' writing.
- Raise standards by ensuring that teaching makes more effective use of assessment data so that more challenging work is set, particularly for boys.
- Ensure that all leaders use a more rigorous approach when monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. During their time in Reception, children make satisfactory progress, with many achieving what is expected nationally by the end of the year. Despite many opportunities to write, boys do not make as much progress as the girls, with some boys struggling to write a sentence by the time they start Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. This was reflected in the results of the Year 2 tests in 2005, which were average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing, and in the average standards of pupils' current work. Whilst many of the girls make good progress with their writing there are a minority of boys whose writing skills are weak. This is because assessment data gathered on these boys is not always effectively used to provide tasks that stretch them. Also, boys do not always find some

of the tasks enjoyable. The school has recently begun a programme for improvement that involves pupils reflecting more on their work and being given more exciting tasks. These measures are not being applied consistently enough by all teachers to have a full impact. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through Years 3 to 6. This is reflected in the results of the Year 6 tests in 2005, which were average in English, mathematics and science, and in the average standards of pupils' current work. Skilful support from teaching assistants ensures pupils with learning difficulties are taught well and make good progress. Targets for improving the performance of Year 6 pupils are challenging and their achievement is continuing to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development is good. This good development is built on good relationships between pupils and adults in an ethos characterised by mutual respect and enjoyment of school life. Pupils' good cultural and spiritual understanding is developed well in the context of the immediate community and world issues. For example, understanding of the Christian faith is strong through good religious education provision and links with the local church. At the same time, pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of Britain is not developed as well as other aspects. Attendance is above average and pupils are happy about all aspects of their school. They are so highly satisfied that when asked what could be improved, many say 'nothing'. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, whether taking the healthy option in school dinners, joining the varied sports clubs, or participating in a health and fitness week. Members of the school council know that they can influence the decisions made on a range of matters, for example, which national charities to support. Pupils work well with the local community, arranging many functions for senior citizens and visiting a nearby supermarket to research aspects of healthy eating. The school's 'Money Week' enables pupils to develop good money management skills, plan budgets and gain insights into local businesses such as retail provision. This prepares them well for the next stage of education and their future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. There are examples of good teaching in all year groups. Teaching and learning in Reception are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is detailed and work is well matched to meet the children's needs. Teachers provide interesting activities although these are restricted by the lack of outside facilities which limits the pupils' physical and creative development. The school has recently secured an extended playground and plans are well underway to develop this for use by pupils in Reception. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour is good and is managed skilfully by staff. Pupils

respond positively to the praise and encouragement they receive. Effective use is made of a recently introduced scheme that gives boys more opportunities to reflect on their work and improve their standards of writing. For example, in a lesson, boys developed their ideas for a story by listening to African music and describing images of the African plains. However, this innovative scheme is presently not used consistently across the school. The result of this is that some boys do not make enough progress with their writing. Occasionally, assessment data gathered on pupils is not effectively used to provide tasks that motivate and stretch pupils, particularly for a minority of boys in Years 1 and 2. Good use is made of the computer facilities which are being used effectively across the curriculum not only to improve pupils' information and communication technology skills but also their literacy skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school provides a broadly balanced curriculum which encourages and supports learning. The curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of extra activities. Pupils benefit from several sports clubs, music groups, performances by visiting theatre groups and regular educational trips which are well attended. These all support pupils' good personal development and enhance their learning and knowledge of the world around them. Weekly themes enable pupils to look in more depth at specific topics. For example, the excellent 'Money Week' helps to develop pupils' economic understanding. The programme for personal, social and health education is a particular strength of the curriculum. It gives pupils many opportunities to develop their personal and interpersonal skills and also develops their understanding of how to be safe and lead a healthy life. The curriculum is satisfactory in Reception. At present, the lack of sufficient outdoor facilities reduces pupils' physical and creative development although the school is in the process of developing these facilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. There is a good level of day-to-day care in the school and the school's administrative team provide high quality support. Pupils feel safe, and this is supported by good child protection procedures, risk assessment and vetting of staff. The school takes great trouble to listen to pupils and act on their views, for example by improving playground facilities. Children report that bullying incidents are extremely rare and dealt with rapidly where they do occur. There are plenty of opportunities to celebrate pupil success within a pleasant, well supervised environment. The school's tracking systems ensure that vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties receive the support they need and this is underpinned by effective liaison with outside agencies. Pupils receive good personal support and encouragement with their work. The guidance they get on how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve their work is however not specific or consistent enough. The school has established good partnerships with

pre-school providers and its partner secondary schools to ensure pupil transfers are smoothly managed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school, including governance, are satisfactory. Leadership is characterised by a supportive and caring ethos which is evident in the good personal development of both staff and pupils. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils are treated equally well. The leadership team has recently been enlarged. As a result, its expertise is increased and there is a firm foundation for moving forward. The headteacher has a sound grasp of the strengths and areas that need to be improved. The school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and its priorities are the right ones. Presently, procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory but the outcomes of lesson observations require greater rigour. Observations focus on what teachers do rather than evaluating their impact on pupils' learning and progress. The monitoring role of subject leaders is not formalised and opportunities to help colleagues improve their teaching are not maximised. Parents support the school well and many take an active role. Their views are sought and acted upon. For example, following requests from parents there has been a significant increase in the range and quality of after school clubs. Governors provide satisfactory support and challenge for the school and make sure statutory requirements are met. Although the school has a considerable budget surplus, most of this has already been allocated for improvements to the outdoor facilities, including a specific area for Reception.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	2	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

Dear Children As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well Millfield is doing. We would like to thank you for looking after us so well. We enjoyed talking to so many of you during playtime and lunchtime about your school, the work you have done and how much you enjoy coming to school. What we found that is really good about your school

You behave well and you enjoy being at Millfield.

Those of you who have difficulties with learning do well.

Your school is a healthy and safe place to be and you help each other when there are problems.

Teachers and other staff in the school look after you well.

Your teachers and other adults are ensuring that you do lots of exciting activities. What we have asked your school to do now

Help some of you to do better in writing.

Help some of you to reach higher standards by making better use of the information the school has about you to set work which always challenges you to do your best.

Make sure that the adults in charge of the school check to confirm they really know how well you are doing. Thank you once again for your help. Yours sincerely David Cox Lead Inspector on behalf of the inspection team