

# Millhouse Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106586
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	287554
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joan McKenna

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr L Collett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mangham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Lea Lane Millhouse Green Penistone Sheffield South Yorkshire S36 9LN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 763019
<b>Fax number</b>	01226 763019

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Millhouse is a very small primary school. The number of pupils in individual year groups varies from six to seventeen. There are more boys than girls on roll, and they comprise up to three-quarters of pupils in some year groups. There are three classes, each with pupils from two or more year groups. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage; the very small number from minority ethnic heritages can speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school serves an area with broadly typical socio-economic circumstances. It has been awarded the Sports Activemark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Millhouse is a satisfactory and improving school. The headteacher, who has been in post for one year, has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that require further development, and he is steadily and systematically initiating the action required to bring about improvement. He has created a strong team approach which has renewed the staff's enthusiasm. The impact of work undertaken over the past year, and the clear and realistic plans to build on this, indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with expectations, and children make satisfactory progress while in the Foundation Stage. At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils generally reach standards that are in line with the national average. The mixed-age classes, necessitated by the small number of pupils in each year group, presents challenges to the school. Efforts are made to meet pupils' different academic needs, with some success as shown by their sound progress. However, while the curriculum is satisfactory overall, planning does not take full account of the range of ages and abilities in classes. The relatively new system for tracking pupils' progress is providing information, which is used suitably to help target work and additional attention more specifically. However, information is not analysed in sufficient detail or used enough in lesson planning. Teaching is also satisfactory. Teachers make pupils aware of what they want them to learn so pupils are clear about the purpose of their work. Pupils respond well to the tasks teachers set and there is a productive climate within classrooms. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make an important contribution to supporting groups of pupils. However, tasks are sometimes not always pitched at the right level of difficulty for all pupils in the class. Occasionally teachers do not organise additional help in lessons well enough to promote learning. Teachers are beginning to share learning targets with their classes, and pupils find these motivating. The marking of pupils' work does not always provide them with sufficient guidance on how to improve. Overall, the academic guidance provided to pupils is satisfactory.

The small size of the school is used to good effect, creating a strong 'family' feel where everyone knows everyone else. Pupils are well looked after and they feel secure, able to turn to adults with any worries. Strong support is given to meeting the specific emotional or behavioural needs of some pupils. Pupils are proud of their school. 'We wouldn't want to go anywhere else,' is typical of their views. They grow into confident, articulate and well behaved young people. Pupils have a particularly good knowledge of how to keep healthy and they participate enthusiastically in the wide range of sporting activities, recognised by the school's Sports Activemark award.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides a strong sense of purpose and direction. The positive impact he is having is recognised and valued staff, governors and parents. Leadership at other levels is not well developed, but is getting better. This is because teachers' leadership roles have been clarified, and training and support have been provided this year. Parents are supportive of the school and of the improvements taking place.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that curriculum planning takes into account the range of ages and abilities within each class.

- Ensure that assessment information is fully analysed and used to increase the rate of progress made by pupils.
- Develop the leadership and management skills of teachers so that they can improve the areas they have responsibility for more effectively.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The attainment of children on entry to school varies each year because of the different nature of the small numbers involved, but it is usually broadly typical for their age. Likewise, by the end of the Foundation Stage standards vary, but pupils generally make satisfactory progress and many reach expected goals. Test and assessment results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 fluctuate, but are usually broadly in line with the national average. However, in 2006, Year 6 test results in English were significantly below average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2007 are lower than in 2006, especially in writing, but overall are still broadly average. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007 are higher than in 2006, especially in English, and are broadly in line with the latest national figures. The achievement of all groups of pupils across the school, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very small number from minority-ethnic heritages, is satisfactory. Previous pockets of underachievement at Key Stage 2 have been eliminated this year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school. Socialising with friends, sport, art and using computers are particularly popular, but many pupils say they 'like everything'. Relationships between pupils of all ages are good and most work and play happily together. A small number of pupils have difficulties relating to others, which occasionally causes friction, but teachers manage such behaviour well. Pupils feel safe and secure. They are involved in drawing up the 'Golden Rules' and generally abide by them. Pupils mature well as they move up the school, helped by the way they are all valued as individuals. When given responsibility, they exercise it well, as seen in the operation of the school council, but the opportunities they have to do so are limited. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, with social and moral aspects stronger than the spiritual and cultural. Pupils know how to keep healthy and have a good understanding of the importance of warming up before exercise, for example. Attendance is above average. The fact that the school judged pupils' personal development as satisfactory when in fact it is good indicates a desire to strengthen it further.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The atmosphere in classrooms is pleasant and focussed on work. Pupils are clearly informed about what is expected of them, and they try hard to do what teachers ask. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and plan lessons, which keep pupils busy and engaged. Pupils usually find their work interesting. Teachers are aware

that their classes include different ages and abilities so they plan lessons to match the work to individual needs. Teaching assistants play an important role, allowing the teacher to organise the class into smaller groups working on different tasks. However, there are times when such efforts are not successful in enabling all pupils to learn as effectively as they could. Work is sometimes too easy for higher attainers and is occasionally too hard for others. Sometimes the way lessons are organised slows the pace of learning. For example, it can take too long to explain what pupils have to do, questioning does not always develop pupils' ideas and understanding, and at times the youngest children do not have enough opportunities to develop independence. Good additional help is provided by the Age Concern volunteers who regularly listen to pupils read.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum gives appropriate emphasis to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, and some attention has been given to developing physical education and creative work. However, subject planning and organisation does not fully take into account the range of needs in the mixed age classes. While satisfactory efforts are made to deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum, some of it is too formal for the younger pupils. There has been too little attention to providing specific activities for those who are identified as gifted or talented. The school has taken care to enrich the curriculum, for example, sporting activities are a strength. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development satisfactorily, especially healthy living. There are plans to strengthen this aspect by implementing a specific programme to develop social and emotional aspects of learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Staff have a good knowledge of individual pupils and cater well for their personal needs. Pupils of all ages feel confident in approaching adults with concerns, knowing they will be listened to. Support for pupils with particular emotional or behavioural needs is strong, and involves close cooperation with outside agencies and parents when necessary. Arrangements for safeguarding children are in place, and governors deal quickly with any matter brought to their attention. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils find their reading, writing and mathematics targets helpful, although teachers do not refer to them enough in lessons. The school gathers and summarises information about pupils' progress but it is not yet used enough to ensure tasks are set at the right level for all pupils. Neither is it analysed in sufficient detail, for example to ensure subject leaders are fully informed about how well all groups of pupils are learning across the school. Teachers mark pupils' work, but they do not always make it clear what pupils need to do next to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher took up post a year prior to the inspection. He quickly recognised the potential of the staff to bring about improvement. He has been successful in making effective changes. He made team working one of his first priorities, and there is a sense of shared commitment and energy. Teachers are beginning to embrace their leadership roles more confidently, helped by training and support targeted to specific need. The headteacher has detailed grasp of

strengths and weaknesses, and the inspection confirmed the accuracy of that evaluation. Other teachers have been involved in monitoring of literacy and numeracy. While helpful, it is not yet comprehensive or evaluative enough to ensure that they have a full picture of exactly what needs to be improved. The chair of governors makes a good contribution to school improvement. He understands the school's situation well and keeps its progress under check, supporting and questioning appropriately. Not all governors are able to challenge and support the school to the same degree at the moment. However, the chair has introduced training and information sessions to help equip others to carry out their roles more effectively and governance overall is satisfactory. Value for money is also satisfactory. The school is planning prudently for an anticipated future deficit caused by falling rolls. The increased pace of change means that improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Millhouse Primary School, Millhouse Green, S36 9LN.

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school earlier this week. I enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. I would like to give a particular thank you to those of you who gave up your breaktime or lunchtime to talk with me.

I judged your school is providing you with a satisfactory education, and some things about it are good - including you! I know you enjoy school. Your attendance is above average. You play and work nicely with each other. Most of you are well behaved and you are sensible when occasionally some others are not. You try hard to do what teachers ask you to. Adults look after you well so you feel confident about asking them for help or talking to them about any worries. The school is good at giving special help to those of you who need it. You know how to keep healthy and you particularly enjoy the good opportunities you have to take part in sport. I was impressed when I heard some of you talk about why it is important to warm up before exercise.

You are making satisfactory progress in your learning. That is because the work you do and teaching you receive is also satisfactory. As you are in classes with pupils from different year groups, I have asked teachers to make sure they plan very carefully to meet all of your needs so you can learn better. The school checks how well you are doing in your work and I have asked it to use the information about this in as many ways as possible to help you do even better. The headteacher is helping to improve the school for you well. I have asked other teachers with special responsibilities for different areas to think about how they can help improve these for you too.

You can help your teachers in their efforts to improve your school by continuing to attend regularly, working hard and doing your best at everything.

I wish you and your teachers well in the future.