

Millbrook Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104432
Local Authority	Knowsley
Inspection number	336309
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Ely
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Maloney
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2006
School address	Kirkby Row Westvale Kirkby L32 0TG
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, parents and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including material on pupils' progress, safeguarding, the curriculum, and 123 questionnaires completed by parents and others from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment, progress and learning for all groups of pupils in English, mathematics and science
- the quality of teaching and assessment in ensuring all pupils achieve their potential
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in enabling pupils to extend their writing skills in all the subjects they study
- the effectiveness of community cohesion and pupils' understanding and experiences of living in a multicultural Britain
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in bringing about sustained improvements in pupils' learning.

Information about the school

This school is above average in size. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities or as more vulnerable is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a morning and afternoon class for Nursery-age children, one Reception and one combined Reception/Year 1 class. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards. On site, there is a pre- and after-school club which is subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Millbrook is a good and improving school, which has made considerable progress since the last inspection in raising pupils' achievement. Instrumental in its success is the rigorous self-evaluation and review of pupils' learning which leaders and governors undertake. Similarly, a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and well planned staff training aid improvement effectively. Actions raised in the school improvement plan are linked clearly to their intended impact on pupils' academic achievement, personal development and well-being. This demonstrates well the good capacity that the school has to improve further.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. This is because good quality provision and effective leadership and management enable them to learn well in a happy, safe and secure learning environment. In Key Stages 1 and 2, good quality teaching, care, support and guidance ensure that pupils' rate of learning and progress is good. As a result, the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are just above average. Pupils achieve well because rigorous tracking enables staff to identify any pupil whose progress slows and quickly to plug the gap with individual support. Pupils' current work and the school's own data show that rates of progress are good across the school, including for the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more vulnerable.

The curriculum is enriched with exciting features such as opportunities for pupils to excel in sport and music. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their writing skills in all the subjects they study. The focus the school gives to promoting pupils' overall personal development and awareness of their place in the local community is good, although their experiences of wider national and global cultures and communities are limited.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the effectiveness of the curriculum by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to extend their writing skills in all subjects they study
- Extend community cohesion practices by:
 - reviewing and developing pupils' experiences of different religions, cultures and communities both nationally and internationally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard, responding enthusiastically to the learning challenges they are set. They also learn well because teachers guide them skillfully through an exciting curriculum that engages their interest. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below age-related expectations and make good progress to reach standards just above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Good transition arrangements from Reception to Year 1 ensure pupils continue to learn through play and progress well in Key Stage 1. This was evident when Year 1 pupils, as time detectives, investigated time based problems in the indoor and outdoor environments. Although standards have risen consistently in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, outcomes in writing are not as high as in reading. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities, within the other subjects they study, to extend their writing skills. Gaps between the attainment of boys and girls have been narrowed because of the close focus the school gives to ensuring learning meets pupils' individual interests and abilities.

Pupils enjoy school and attendance is broadly average and improving. Behaviour is good. Pupils are considerate and helpful and display a good level of maturity. They feel safe in school. They say, 'We know that teachers will always help us if there is a problem'. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and they value the broad range of sporting and exercise opportunities available to them. The school council is effective and helps to support the good links the school has with the local community. The good progress pupils make in basic skills, as well as the roles and responsibilities they have in school, helps them to prepare well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They show respect for the needs and interests of others and recognise the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' knowledge of other cultures is satisfactory as they have only limited experiences of working, playing alongside and discovering more about children who are different from those represented in the local community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan activities which make learning enjoyable and purposeful, and often challenge pupils through skillful questioning to explain and justify their answers. In one outstanding mathematics lesson, for example, pupils were extremely motivated by the exciting way the teacher presented learning and the process of making pictographs. Pupils were enthused to develop their own ideas, learning was accelerated for all groups of pupils and outstanding progress was made. In many lessons, pupils work in pairs and groups to help each other with their work and to discuss how this could be even better. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more vulnerable receive good support and, as a consequence, make good progress.

Teachers recognise that learning could be even better and are determined to further develop strategies to make good lessons outstanding. Currently, questioning is not always challenging enough, particularly for the more able pupils. Marking and feedback are helpful but occasionally pupils do not receive enough guidance as to how to improve their work further.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement. It is broad and balanced and is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability through good provision for literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Pupils' enjoyment is enhanced well by the curriculum. They learn to speak French and have a variety of performance opportunities, visits, visitors and residential trips. However, pupils have limited opportunities to practise and extend their writing skills across all subjects of the curriculum.

Staff know the pupils well and this is seen in the high levels of confidence pupils and their parents and carers have in the levels of care provided. Close work with families carried out by all staff and, in particular the learning mentor, has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to attending school and, as a result, attendance levels are improving. Similarly, effective links with a range of outside agencies provide well targeted support, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are vulnerable to make the best of the opportunities that the school provides.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly regarded and effective senior leadership team provides clear and determined leadership for adults and pupils. Their aim, continually to improve provision and outcomes for pupils, is fully shared by all members of staff. As a consequence, standards are improving and the school community has a sense of purpose and confidence. Senior and middle leaders closely monitor and evaluate performance and they implement with energy and determination actions to secure improvement. All pupils are given an equal opportunity to learn and to feel secure. The areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully: teaching is now good overall and all groups of pupils make good progress in their learning. The school uses its budget and other resources efficiently and, as a result, it provides good value for money.

Partnerships with others are good. Parents and carers say how pleased they are with the school and how welcome they are made to feel. The school works hard and continues to develop ways to engage with parents so that they feel that they have an active role to play in their children's education. The school has made a satisfactory start to promoting community cohesion. As a result, pupils' involvement in the local community is good, although this has not yet been extended to widen their experiences of national and global communities.

Child protection procedures and safeguarding guidelines are fully in place and meet national requirements with expertise on the governing body very effectively supporting this. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school's work and hold it rigorously to account. They are frequently in school and are active supporters of its work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It is led and managed well and staff work together as an effective team. When children begin the Nursery, their skills are below those expected at this age, especially in their language and social development. All children make good progress towards the early learning goals and, when they move to Year 1, most children have age-related skills in all the areas of learning. The quality of adult support for learning is good. Well-planned indoor and outdoor learning environments develop children's speaking, listening and social skills particularly well. Activities such as 'Millbrook's Got Talent' extend children's confidence and self-belief as they enthusiastically take the microphone in the Nursery to sing and entertain their friends. However, although the school has plans to improve outdoor provision further in order to provide children more opportunities to develop their physical skills, these are currently limited. There are good links with parents and carers who have a wide range of opportunities to share in the children's experience through, for instance, contributing to learning stories or attending family literacy sessions. Staff pay a high level of attention to ensuring children are safe and all welfare requirements are met. They use assessments well to plan activities and build on prior learning. For example, in Reception, good modelling of language took place using the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' story and children were then observed in the outdoor area, building the bridge and chatting with one another as to how they could 'hide from the troll'.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all of the parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire were content with the quality of education and care provided at Millbrook. Comments include: 'The staff

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are friendly and approachable' and 'I feel happy that any concerns I may have will be dealt with effectively'. The inspectors found no reason to disagree with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Millbrook Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 295 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	60	47	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	59	49	40	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	56	47	38	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	53	53	43	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	65	53	55	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	50	55	45	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	65	53	56	46	0	0	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	53	43	58	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	49	58	47	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	48	54	44	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	41	63	51	3	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	56	46	62	50	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	54	51	41	2	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



6 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Millbrook Community Primary School, Liverpool, L32 0TG

I would like to thank you for your help to the team when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit very much and thoroughly enjoyed meeting you. I especially enjoyed listening to children in the Nursery singing in the 'Millbrook's Got Talent' show. Now I would like to share with you what the inspection found out about your school. Yours is a good school. Some of the best things about it are:

- all adults take good care of you and you told us that you feel safe in school
- you have lots of fun and enjoy learning whilst you play in the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes
- you are making good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave
- you are developing into responsible and mature young people
- the school provides many exciting things for you to learn and several of these prepare you well for your future.

To make the school even better, I have asked teachers to:

- give you more opportunities to practise your writing skills in all the subjects you study
- broaden your experience of different people and religions by extending links beyond your local area.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. I hope that you will carry on working hard and help the teachers so that Millbrook can become an even better school.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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