

Millhouse Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106586
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	336700
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sandra Farrar
Headteacher	Mr Gary Mangham
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 8 lessons or part lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including school policies, the development plan, monitoring records, analyses of pupils' attainment and progress and reports from visits by the local authority. Inspectors analysed 39 questionnaires returned by parents.

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

- pupils' progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2
- the quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum
- the effectiveness of leadership and management and its impact to improve pupils' achievement and raise standards
- the school's promotion of community cohesion and pupils' understanding of communities different from their own in Britain and other countries.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. All pupils are of White British heritage. The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in a class that also contains Year 1 pupils. Four of the Reception age children attend part-time in the afternoon. The school holds a Sports Active Mark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Pupils' above average attendance, good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning show that they enjoy school. Children enter the Reception class with skills expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress and attain expected levels at the end of the Reception Year. In Years 1 to 6, generally sound teaching ensures overall progress remains satisfactory. Overall, standards are broadly average at the end of Year 6. The numbers of pupils attaining at the higher levels, particularly in mathematics and science, are low because more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Too often, all pupils undertake the same tasks regardless of their ability because teachers do not use assessment to match work to pupils' needs accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and achieve as well as their classmates.

A satisfactory curriculum, with a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy, enables pupils to develop their skills satisfactorily. Good enrichment activities enable pupils to pursue their interests further. The pastoral care arrangements are good. Academic guidance is less effective. While teachers discuss pupils' work with them they do not always mark work regularly. Pupils have personal targets to help them improve their work but teaching makes little reference to these targets so that consequently pupils do not know when they achieve them successfully.

The headteacher, staff and governors provide a friendly, caring environment where pupils feel safe and happy. As one parent commented, 'We love the cosy feel in the school and children love it here'. Although the school wants to provide the best education possible, the monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour and self-evaluation is not wholly accurate. Assessments are not always accurate and teachers are not held to account sufficiently for pupils' progress. Consequently, the aspirational targets the school sets itself are not always achieved. Governors, while supportive, have not held the school to account regarding standards.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school promotes community cohesion well in the local area and links further afield are developing. At the time of the inspection, procedures for safeguarding met requirements. Senior leaders have partially addressed the key issues raised in the last report. Subject leaders are more involved in school improvement. Standards in English are now above average in Year 6, and provision for children in the Reception class has improved. In the light of these positive aspects, the school demonstrates its satisfactory capacity to continue to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise achievement and standards in all subjects by:
 - making lessons challenging, particularly for the more-able
 - ensuring teachers use assessment to help them plan work at the right level
 - marking work regularly so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they could do better
- giving pupils more opportunities to learn and discover for themselves.
- Ensure leaders and managers improve outcomes for pupils by:
 - rigorously monitoring teaching and learning to ensure it is consistently good
 - holding teachers to account for the progress of all pupils in their classes
 - ensuring assessments made about pupils' progress are accurate
 - doing more to help pupils feel better prepared for secondary school.
- Ensure that the governing body:
 - monitors and evaluates the work of the school and holds staff to account for standards achieved
 - does more to extend pupils' understanding of diverse communities in Britain and abroad.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy learning and work hard. Pupils answer questions eagerly. They work well with others and persevere even when tasks are unclear or undemanding. Pupils have a firm grounding in literacy and apply what they know in new situations well. For example, Year 1 pupils excitedly explained why birds migrate in winter and Year 6 pupils identified effective alliteration in persuasive writing. While overall standards at the end of Year 6 are average, standards in English are higher because of the opportunities pupils have to do extended writing in other subjects. However, the rate of progress is not consistent for all pupils, because teachers' expectations are not always high enough for the more-able pupils who sometimes under-perform. Most pupils develop the key skills necessary to prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

Pupils respond well when encouraged to explore and develop their ideas. They enjoy practical tasks where they can work things out independently. However, too frequently, they have to listen for too long and are insufficiently involved in question and answer sessions or in interacting with others. In these instances, while still well behaved, they lose interest but continue to listen patiently. Pupils who need additional help with their learning receive satisfactory individual guidance to enable them to participate fully in lessons.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school because 'it's like a big family here and teachers help us if we get upset'. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They

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form good relationships, are kind and friendly. Older pupils look after younger ones without prompting. Pupils are involved in fund raising and school council members organise social events and playground activities to benefit others. Pupils have a good understanding of why it is important to adopt healthy lifestyles. They enjoy healthy lunches and the many sporting activities the school offers. Visits and visitors, extend pupils' understanding of the wider world. However, pupils' cultural development, particularly their awareness of other cultures and faiths is less well developed. As one pupil said, 'we could visit schools with children from different countries and learn about people who are different so we don't say things that would offend them'. While pupils are extremely positive about the school and generally very confident here, older pupils express concerns about moving to secondary school, 'because it is so big and we won't know many people there'.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers plan interesting activities that encourage pupils to think about their learning. Pupils particularly enjoy timed challenges in mathematics where the

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

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competitive edge makes learning fun. Teaching assistants are generally used well to support pupils who need additional help to participate fully. However, too frequently, time for discussion between pupils to share ideas and be more confident in their answers is limited. This is because teachers spend too long on their presentations and allow insufficient time to ask questions to assess pupils' understanding. Consequently, lessons lack pace and challenge and, with little reference to pupils' prior attainment, all pupils invariably complete the same tasks before they move on to more challenging work. While some marking is good, it is inconsistent. Teachers make rare reference to pupils' individual targets, so it is hard for pupils to know how well they are doing or what to do to achieve more. Inaccuracies in assessment result in a significant number of pupils not always achieving as well as they should.

The curriculum ensures pupils develop their skills step-by-step. The school has made a start on linking different subjects together, but the effectiveness of this varies from class to class. Pupils enjoy learning French and benefit from the cultural dimension this offers. Modified plans, relevant interventions and appropriate resources enable pupils who need specific support with their learning to achieve as well as their classmates.

Extra-curricular activities, and the use of visits and visitors that bring learning alive, are good. Pupils particularly benefit from outdoor pursuits and various inter-school sports. A good programme of personal, social and health education ensures pupils understand, for example, how to stay healthy and safe and the dangers of smoking and drug abuse.

Parents are happy with the way their children settle into school and say that staff respond promptly if individuals need help. Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure, for example, that pupils who need specific help or other personal guidance receive the right support quickly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is a caring environment. At the time of the inspection, child protection procedures met requirements and all aspects of safeguarding were secure. Health and safety procedures are sound. The school promotes community cohesion well with the local community. Links with diverse communities further afield are developing. While partnerships with the local area, including other primary schools are good, links with the secondary school are not as effective. The school has high aspirations for its pupils and has been successful in improving standards in English since the last inspection. Leaders

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and managers regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning but the procedures lack rigour. As a result, they occasionally fail to check that teachers use the information to match work to pupils' needs effectively. Following various changes in staff responsibilities since the last inspection and the introduction of better assessment procedures, the senior leadership team is now giving greater priority to raising standards quickly in every class. The school fosters good relations between all pupil groups and ensures pupils who need support in their personal or academic development receive this additional help in order to achieve as well as all other pupils. Governors are extremely supportive and allocate generous resources to support staff training. However, they have not challenged the information provided by senior leaders regarding standards or held staff to account for pupils' progress.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are very happy at school because they feel safe and cared for well. The school fosters good relations with parents and carers so children are prepared well before they start and school routines are familiar. They arrive eagerly to a busy, attractive environment and settle quickly because staff support them effectively. They enjoy learning, behave well and form good relationships. Most are confident and inquisitive learners who avidly absorb information, for example, about bird migration, polar ice caps and what happens when snow melts. Children who need specific help are supported sensitively. 'My child loves it here. It's lovely because it is such a small old fashioned village school where everyone knows everyone', is typical of parents' and

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carers' comments. With clear procedures to check that children try everything that is planned for them, they make sound progress in all the areas of learning. They explore new activities excitedly and enjoy playing alone as well as with others. The outside play areas are particularly popular and effectively extend their physical and creative development.

Leadership and management, along with provision, are satisfactory. Staff plan a good balance of activities that children choose and that are led by adults. Most children work well in adult-led sessions where teaching is usually sound. More-able children benefit from working alongside the Year 1 pupils, but this is not always so for those who are lower attaining. Occasionally a few, especially those who need more time to explore and learn independently, struggle to maintain interest and attention. This is especially so when presentations are too long and the work is not matched accurately to their needs. This results in overall progress being satisfactory. Children attain average skill levels at the end of the Reception Year.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents' and carers' views about the school are mostly very positive. They say their children enjoy school, teaching is good, children are safe and well cared for, the school is led and managed well, the school helps children have a healthy lifestyle and children are prepared well for the future. A few raise concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, how it helps parents support their children's learning and say that it does not take account of the views of parents and carers.

Inspectors agree with many of the positive views expressed by parents and carers. The school regularly sends out information to parents and they are welcome in school if they wish to raise any concerns or issues. However, inspectors judge the leadership and management of the school and the quality of teaching to be satisfactory rather than good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Millhouse 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 inspector received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 81 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	71	13	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	71	13	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	61	16	33	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	57	18	37	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	59	17	35	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	61	15	31	3	6	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	65	14	29	0	0	2	4
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)	24	49	18	37	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	59	14	29	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	59	14	29	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	55	16	33	2	4	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	29	59	19	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	61	16	33	1	2	1	2

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.



3 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Millhouse Primary School, Sheffield, S36 9LN

Thank you for making the other inspector and I welcome and for being so friendly when your school was inspected. It is clear that you enjoy school and that you have many good friends. You said that you like your teachers and that they help you if you have problems. You said you like the trips that you go on, but would also like to visit other schools that are different from yours. We were particularly impressed by the kind way you look after each other and to hear you say that you all feel part of a 'big family' at school. I really enjoyed speaking French with Class 1 and learning all about Inuits and igloos.

Overall, your school is giving you a satisfactory education. Some things, such as your behaviour and attendance, are good and you learn a lot about how to stay safe and healthy. You work hard at school and enjoy learning. The staff take good care of you. While these aspects of your school are good, we think that a few things could be better. You make satisfactory progress in all your subjects, but you could do even better.

We have asked the headteacher, other staff and governors to do the following to improve the school:

- help you achieve higher standards in all your subjects by giving you, especially those of you who find learning easy, more challenging work that builds on what you can already do
- mark your work regularly so you know how well you are doing
- make sure teachers use all the information they have to help you reach your targets
- make sure Year 6 pupils feel more confident about moving to their next school
- make sure that the adults who manage your school keep a close check on how well you achieve in every class
- make sure that you learn more about communities that are different from yours.

These improvements need to happen quickly so that you do even better in your work. There are things you could do to help too. For example, you could make sure you ask for harder work if it is too easy.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector

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