

# Milldene Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114760
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338441
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Sutherland-Harper

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Karen Springett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Barbrook Lane Tiptree Colchester
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including a sample of pupils' books, school development plans, minutes of the governing body meetings, information about the monitoring of vulnerable pupils, records of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and protecting pupils, policies and 89 parental questionnaire responses.

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

- standards attained by all pupils, especially in English, mathematics and science
- strategies to develop teaching, learning and the curriculum, and how well these are monitored
- leaders and managers' abilities to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and embed ambition in order to drive up improvement
- attendance and behaviour and their impact on achievement.

## Information about the school

Milldene Primary School, along with other schools, serves the village of Tiptree in the North-East of Essex. Pupils are drawn largely from the immediate surroundings, with some travelling from outside the catchment area. Housing is a mix of privately owned and council properties. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than found nationally and the number of pupils receiving free school meals is also lower than the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The headteacher has been in post since April 2006. There is an on-site playgroup which is managed by a private provider and which was inspected separately.

**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

Milldene Primary School is a good school. Children enter the school with skills and abilities which are similar to those expected for their age and make good progress as they move through the school. In 2008, standards improved in English, mathematics and science as a result of focused intervention strategies. Ongoing development of these strategies has resulted in further significant improvement in all core subjects at Key Stage 2. Close analysis of pupil progress and well planned interventions at all levels have enabled leaders and managers to drive up standards. Achievement is now good as a result of a more stable staffing situation, improving attendance and the improvement in standards.

The vast majority of the pupils are of White British origin. The needs of different groups of pupils are well catered for by the creative curriculum as in an excellent Year 6 lesson which used string to illustrate mathematical shapes and to lead pupils into wide ranging investigative skills and group work. The outstanding work of the special educational needs coordinator and her learning support assistant has resulted in significant value added for a number of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils recognise that, 'this is a very encouraging school which will help you do well.'

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They feel that they can talk to staff who will listen carefully and resolve any issues, as was clearly evidenced during lunch in the dining hall. Behaviour in lessons is good or better as children are increasingly engaged in their work and attendance has improved since the last inspection. Good behaviour is contributing to the upward trend in achievement. The headteacher is a constant presence around the school and has worked with her team to develop the more creative curriculum, typified by a Year 4 lesson on 'pop art' which engaged all pupils and made them want to develop their artistic skills. The curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements, is depicted in the excellent displays everywhere in the school and enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors who enrich learning opportunities. As one pupil put it, 'The school is good at doing interesting things to make you work hard.' The varied curriculum allows the school to make excellent provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, incorporating strong local links. As a result, pupils develop well and become well-rounded individuals.

Strategies to develop provision in teaching and learning have resulted in a considerable increase in the quality of teaching and good or outstanding engagement in the vast majority of lessons. These strategies are rigorously reviewed by the headteacher and her senior team and the findings shared with colleagues whose use of data to inform assessment has been developed. Teachers are increasingly sensitive to the need for pace and challenge in lessons and their ambition to do their best for the pupils has

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improved results.

The clear and focused leadership of the headteacher, together with the able support provided by her deputy and other senior staff, has been the driving force in an ambitious and increasingly effective programme of development. All leaders and managers have a clearer view of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a result of the increased focus on monitoring and tracking of pupil efforts and regular review of these procedures. The staff work from the shared vision and belief in the school's potential to make learning the challenging experience which is leading to improvement at all levels. As a result of clear strategies and the good use of monitoring, the school has good capacity to improve.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure consistency of expectations and interventions to raise standards even further by:
  - sharing best practice in teaching and learning
  - implementing a fuller range of teaching and learning styles to suit the creative curriculum
  - a regular review of strategies and indications from data
  - developing the ongoing dialogue between all staff across the school.
  - Increase opportunities for pupils to take on more responsibility in the classroom by having more charge of their own learning.

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

**2**

Attainment of pupils is good with increasing numbers reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of being well supported by an excellent team of teachers and support staff. Boys and girls make the same progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do just as well as all other pupils. Work in books this year confirms that attainment is rising. There is good use of assessment for learning but this is not yet fully consistent across the school. Progress in almost all lessons is good or better. Outstanding lessons fully engage pupils through a variety of effective learning strategies relating to their own experience so that all pupils do as well as they can. Pupils are well informed about healthy lifestyles since the school places great emphasis on the importance of exercise and healthy meals. They enjoy the opportunity to participate in a range of out-of-school activities such as choir visits to the community and are active at break and lunchtimes. Each class has an allotment and chooses what to grow in it. Older pupils make a good contribution to the school as play leaders. Growing musical development is making a highly positive contribution to pupil involvement in the school and locally. Assemblies offer an attention-holding blend of thought provoking ideas and toe-tapping music. Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is good because pupils have learned to listen to and respect each other.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching has developed across the school so that most lessons are now good with areas of outstanding practice typified by excellent pace and challenge, high expectations and well-differentiated work. Good use of questioning and clear lesson objectives increasingly enable pupils to reach and surpass their targets. Planning of lessons has become more detailed and lesson plans include room for analysis of follow-on steps to accompany the high quality oral assessment occurring in a number of lessons. Increasingly, lessons include a careful blend of teacher talk, pupil action, group work, self and peer assessment which offer opportunities for pupils to be involved in interactive learning. Marking is thorough and helps pupils to know exactly where they are in their learning and what they still have to do. Care, guidance and support are outstanding because the school has strong knowledge of its learning community, understands the needs of each child and responds in an individual and effective way.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's belief in her school and clear focus on driving up standards and achievement have led to ongoing improvement since the last inspection. Her detailed strategies, shared with all staff, have been supported by the work of an able deputy headteacher and senior management team. The school is now over-subscribed. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored effectively and the needs of individual pupils across the spectrum are planned for and increasingly well met. The head teacher's determination to implement rigorous monitoring and evaluation has resulted in a renewed sense of purpose in the school. Analysis of test results and data is increasing in rigour and being used effectively to inform planning. As a result, staff are increasingly well deployed. Senior leaders are developing a growing understanding of colleagues' strengths and areas for development. Close links with the National College for School Leadership are helping to develop leadership potential in the school and with neighbouring schools.

Governors are increasingly supportive and challenging to the school. In addition to regular visits to the school and links with curricular areas, they have supported the drive for further improvement. Provision for community cohesion is excellent. The school reaches out into its local community to supplement its provision as in visits from the local fire brigade and police to help pupils become more aware of safety in the community. Local people come in to help with gardening and design of play areas. The school is actively expanding its national links and has significantly developed links with its partner school in Uganda. Governors hold the school to account and set rigorous performance management targets for the headteacher.

Safeguarding procedures are good and health and safety checks are fully in place. Parents are enthusiastic in their support for the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress in skills development from the expected starting point for their age. By the end of Reception, most are working securely within early learning grades. They do particularly well in linking sounds and letters and in their dispositions and attitudes. Children develop their personal skills and play well together. They behave well and know the importance of keeping safe and healthy as when they wash their hands before snacks. Children make good progress because activities are interesting and meet their needs. Well-planned activities are based on regular observations. The school keeps a good record of their development. Both indoors and outdoors are used equally well for a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. All safeguarding policies and procedures promote the children's welfare. The quality of teaching is good. All adults work well as a team, sharing the same high expectations of work and behaviour. Leadership and management are good. Although newly appointed, the leader has a good understanding of how to improve provision. Links with parents and carers are excellent and parents are extremely positive about the start their children make. There is scope for children to take on more responsibility and for further focus on what they are to learn.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Approximately 44% of parents responded to the parental questionnaire and the vast



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majority expressed satisfaction with the school. A number of parents or carers of Reception children felt they could only answer 'don't know' to particular questions because it is so early in the year. A very few parents felt that communication could be better but the inspection team feels that more information is provided than in many schools.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Milldene 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	64	30	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	71	26	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	51	35	39	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	58	28	31	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	66	25	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	61	32	36	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	64	31	35	0	0	0	0
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)	44	49	35	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	54	33	37	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	66	23	26	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	51	37	42	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	64	31	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	61	33	37	0	0	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



11 October 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Milldene Primary School, Tiptree, Colchester CO5 0EF

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out what life is like at Milldene Primary School. These are the things that we liked about your school.

You are very well looked after by all the teachers and other adults in the school and you look after each other.

The creative curriculum which gives you many opportunities to approach your learning in a variety of ways.

You listen to each other and respect each other's views so that everybody has an equal opportunity to do well.

Your headteacher and other senior staff are working very hard to make sure that you have the best possible teaching and learning opportunities.

The music you make and the colourful displays which welcome visitors into the school.

In order for your school to continue the improvement it has made, we have asked your teachers to keep on sharing and talking about what they do best. We would like them to review their plans on the basis of your results and to develop the ways in which they teach and you learn, so that creativity is at the heart of everything you do. And you can be even more creative yourselves with what and how you learn if you have more input into what you do.

We would like you to sing, not just in assemblies and at your harvest concert, but about all the great things your school is doing. It was such a pleasure to see so many happy faces in the hall and in each classroom we visited.

With best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Lead inspector

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