

Milefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106617
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	336706
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Terry Haynes
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Murray
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
School address	Milefield Lane Grimethorpe Barnsley S72 7BH
Telephone number	01226 710329
Fax number	01226 781823
Email address	r.rymer@barnsley.org

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2010
Inspection number	336706

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed the eight teachers working in school during the inspection. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at their books. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's improvement plan, policies, safeguarding documents and details of the progress made by pupils. The 49 questionnaires returned from parents and carers were analysed together with those from pupils and staff.

- the reason why the rate of pupils' progress appears to vary across the school and whether pupils who are gifted and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make enough progress
- the quality of pupils' personal development in the light of some concerns about the high level of absence and whether pupils who have been absent are well supported on their return to school
- the quality of the school's leadership and management in relation to raising attainment and promoting regular attendance.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school that serves its local community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is double the national average. A larger than average number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is almost double the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language.

There is a children's centre sited within the grounds of the school that is inspected separately. A new governing body and a new headteacher were appointed in September 2009. The school has been awarded the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

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

Milefield is a good school that has significantly improved since its previous inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage has evolved over time and is now outstanding. It provides children with an excellent start to their education. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have underachieved in the past but, as a result of good teaching and an effective, relevant curriculum, they are now making good progress and attaining average standards by the end of Year 6.

The outstanding curriculum, that provides pupils with many memorable experiences and supports teaching, is a real strength of the school. The safeguarding of pupils is also outstanding and pupils feel very safe in school. These significant strengths provide a rich environment that supports pupils' learning very effectively. Pupils develop into independent and confident learners who value the many exciting learning opportunities that they are offered. They behave well and usually make very healthy lifestyle choices. Most pupils attend school regularly, but a small minority have been absent from school too much. Most of these pupils have a range of needs that require additional help and support to ensure good attendance. The school is working hard to provide this support. The majority of teaching is good. The strength of teaching derives from teachers' ability to tailor learning to the interests and abilities of pupils. Learning is, therefore, relevant and pupils are fully engaged in their work. They are involved in all stages of reviewing their work and know what they need to do to improve. However, there are a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching linked to lack of experience or failure to follow the school's excellent policies on marking and planning.

The school's good improvement since the previous inspection illustrates the ambition and drive that both the former and the current senior management teams and governors have provided. The new team has continued the previous drive to improve the school. It has worked hard to ensure that its vision for an inclusive school is shared with the school community. Accurate self-evaluation informs thorough planning for the school's improvement. This illustrates well the good capacity that the school has to improve further. Strong relationships with parents and carers and effective local community partnerships ensure good support for the work of the school, particularly in relation to pupils' care, guidance and support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and consolidate progress across the school by:
- - ensuring that all teaching is of at least good quality
- - making sure that all staff use the school's marking and planning policies

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

consistently.

- Improve attendance by:
- - providing families who find it difficult to ensure their children's regular attendance at school with the help and support they require from the school's new attendance officer.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' achievement and their enjoyment of learning are good. All groups of pupils learn effectively as they are provided with interesting activities that meet their learning needs. They are also confident as they recognise that they are valued members of a safe community that extends beyond the school gates. As provision has improved, pupils' progress has accelerated and is much more even across the school than previously. There is no significant difference over time between the performance of girls and boys. Attainment has risen in English, mathematics and science following the provision of more practical tasks in mathematics and science and the implementation of a whole-school programme to improve writing. Pupils' work in class and in their books shows that almost all year groups are attaining in line with the national average. This is confirmed by the school's own assessments. More-able pupils now attain the higher Level 5, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attain well in relation to their sometimes very severe learning difficulties.

Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school. They undertake a large range of key roles in school and the school council gives pupils a real voice and an understanding of democracy. Through the school council, pupils learn about fundraising and enterprise as well as teamwork and social skills. Pupils raise funds for a child in Malawi and contribute to a museum that celebrates local events and to a newspaper column. They make a good contribution to the local community and have developing links with other schools and the global community. The displays in school are evidence of pupils' contribution to communities around the world. They also have a good knowledge of a full range of cultures and celebrate the small number of minority ethnic cultures present in school. Pupils behave well and act very responsibly in relation to safety and healthy lifestyles. An enterprise club that produces healthy snacks for pupils to purchase is very successful. Although the attendance of a small minority of pupils is low, there are specific circumstances that contribute to their absence that cannot be interpreted as a lack of willingness to attend school. However, their low attendance detracts from their overall achievement and to the development of their workplace skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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' 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
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most of the teaching observed and analysis of work in pupils' books demonstrates skilful teaching based on excellent relationships, very thorough planning and exciting resources. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used with confidence to demonstrate and record ideas and to motivate pupils. Detailed assessment informs lesson planning and a range of approaches are used to involve pupils fully in their learning. In one class, studying Alice in Wonderland, the teacher took on the dress and character of the Mad Hatter and pupils asked very imaginative questions about his life to inform their character writing. Such teaching inspires and involves pupils of all abilities. Well-planned independent tasks and very good use of teaching assistants ensure that all pupils succeed. Marking is usually constructive and most pupils know how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve. However, there are a few examples of teaching that do not display good organisation and planning, leaving pupils confused about what they should be doing. In these classes the work in pupils' books shows insufficient progress and marking in these books does not adhere to the school's policy. The curriculum is continually evolving to meet the needs of all pupils. Basic skills are taught through key themes that are based on pupils' interests and experience. Lessons are increasingly based on pupils developing their own lines of enquiry. The school also provides a full range of curricular experiences that enrich pupils' learning and give them good experiences of life beyond the school. Music, sport and a full range of well-attended after-school clubs further enhance curricular provision.

Kindness, care and respect for all pupils and members of the school community pervade the school. The good welfare team works tirelessly with families and in effective

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

partnership with external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. Improved attendance is an example of the impact of this. There are plans in place to improve attendance further through the recent appointment of an attendance officer. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or special gifts are provided for well. There are good arrangements to support pupils when they change classes or schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher, senior leaders and the newly appointed governors are a strong team. They are dedicated and ambitious and are building on the previous improvements made in the school. Pupils' progress is accelerating and attainment is now broadly average. This is a significant achievement as most pupils have very low attainment when they start school. This improvement has been achieved by very good evaluation of the school's effectiveness and through the systematic tackling of areas that need improvement. The high-quality safeguarding procedures reflect the team's high expectations and their thoroughness in planning for improvement as new requirements have been introduced. All aspects of safeguarding permeate the school and collaborative partnerships with other agencies are exemplary in ensuring child protection. Parents and carers are important partners in their children's learning and are well supported in developing their own skills. The school is a very cohesive community that values the inclusion of all and ensures that teaching, the curriculum and the care of pupils enables all to achieve their potential. This is strongly supported by very good links with the local community through which governors ensure that pupils have access to a wealth of experiences that contribute to their national and global understanding. This includes the local school ambassador initiative, a visit to London and strong global links with Europe, Africa and beyond. These experiences significantly contribute to good community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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 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
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although children start Nursery with a wide range of skills, their overall attainment on entry is well below age-related expectations. However, they make very good progress and by the end of the Reception class their attainment is broadly in line with the national average. A skilled team works to provide exciting learning with a strong focus on improving children's language skills and thus, ultimately, their ability to write. The environment has many interesting activities that also develop writing skills. Children are enthusiastic about writing and want to make labels for everything. Outdoor provision very effectively extends the learning that takes place indoors.

A detailed analysis of children's performance ensures that learning experiences are specifically tailored to children's needs and interests. In one lesson children had been excited by a discussion about performing on stage. In the following lesson they made a stage and performed as a band. Excellent learning happens as a result of a series of challenges presented to the children, such as 'Can you build a zoo for the animals?' Teaching is consistently at least good and sometimes outstanding. Small-group sessions constantly develop children's literacy skills, enabling them to make outstanding progress. Behaviour is very good as staff ensure that children are ready to learn. Children receive excellent kindness, consideration, care and support. Partnerships with parents and carers are strong. Time is very well managed and routine tasks are undertaken because teamwork is exemplary. The management of the provision is outstanding.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Typical comments refer to the excellent curriculum, the very good care of children, their good progress and their enjoyment of school. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities warmly praised the work done to help their children. A number of them commented on the effectiveness of the leadership and management and the improvements made.

Typically parents and carers reported that: 'Children make very good progress in this school. They are pushed all the way. This is absolutely fantastic. Pupils who are struggling are given very valuable support and develop very good relationships with teachers. It is the sort of relationship and support that can only be built up if the teacher really cares about the work she does with the children.'

An extremely small minority expressed concerns about having to park outside the school grounds, school meals, supervision at break times, lack of support for parents and carers about their children's transition to the next class and too little notice given to parents and carers about some activities. The inspectors could find no evidence to substantiate these views. They sampled school meals and found there was a wide choice of plentiful, good-quality food. The parking issue arises from the school making the premises more secure and recognising that parents' and carers' use of the car park constitutes a potential risk as it causes congestion.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Milefield 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 173 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	45	25	51	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	55	20	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	41	25	51	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	43	24	49	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	45	26	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	45	22	45	3	6	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	57	18	37	2	4	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)	15	31	28	57	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	49	22	45	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	51	19	39	4	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	37	26	53	4	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	37	26	53	4	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	47	24	49	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



10 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Milefield Primary School, Barnsley, S72 7BH

I would like to thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. You were all very helpful and polite and showed a lot of enthusiasm for your work. In particular, I must thank the pupils who gave up some of their time to talk about their work with us. You tell us that you really enjoy school because you have fun while you learn and we agree with you.

Milefield Primary is a good school. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make an outstanding start in school as they are very well cared for and they are able to learn about the things that interest them. You have a very exciting school and the curriculum and teaching are usually at least good. Therefore, you make good progress and by the end of Year 6 your attainment is average. You behave well and are kind and considerate to each other. You take on many responsibilities in school. We are very impressed by your school council and how you all have a say in the changes that happen in school. You make good choices to help you to stay fit and healthy. Most of you attend school regularly and are punctual. However, some of you do find it hard to attend regularly. Your school is well led and managed and staff look after you very well so you are right to feel safe in school.

One of the reasons for our visit was to see how your school can improve. We found out that although most teaching is good there are times when lessons could be better. Also the attendance of some of you could be improved. Therefore, we have asked your headteacher to:

- raise your attainment by improving some of the teaching
- help those of you who do not attend regularly to come to school more often.

You can help to improve your school by attending regularly and working hard to achieve your targets.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Carmen Markham

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.