

Milefield Primary School

Milefield Lane, Grimethorpe, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S72 7BH

Inspection dates 7–8 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders' clear vision for the school, and their determination to succeed, is driving good improvement.
- Teaching is managed well by leaders who communicate high expectations and check they are maintained. This has resulted in much improved pupils' progress over the current year.
- Governors know the school well and recognise its importance within the community. They support school leaders well, and share their clear vision for the school.
- Pupils behave well. They are keen to learn and their attendance has improved significantly. Pupils feel safe in school and they are cared for well.
- Good teaching over time promotes pupils' good progress. Pupils' different abilities are provided for well. As a result, they say that they enjoy lessons. The learning for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is planned well.
- Provision for sport is a particular strength in the school.
- From starting points that are below those typically expected, almost all pupils make at least expected progress and a significant proportion do better than that, by the end of Year 6. Pupils' overall achievement is good. Achievement in reading is particularly good.
- The school works effectively with the local authority to secure improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some inconsistencies in teaching are still to be addressed. Staff do not always pinpoint, precisely, what pupils need to learn to ensure work is always challenging. Feedback from teachers does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- The most effective teaching is not used sufficiently as an example to help improve the overall quality of teaching further.
- Leadership of the early years requires improvement. Teaching and other provision in the early years is not having enough impact on all children's learning. Too few children reach or exceed a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. Links with the children centre are weak.

Information about this inspection

- Pupils' learning was observed in a range of lessons and from samples of their work. Two lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors discussed the school's work with members of staff, pupils, parents, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The views of 41 parents who responded to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, as well as a survey of parents' views conducted by the school. Questionnaires completed by members of staff were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a wide range of documentation that included, national assessment data and the school's assessments, external reports, the school's own view of its work, curriculum information and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Alison Cookson	Additional Inspector
Nicola Shipman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school in which almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium, is almost double the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, at the end of Year 6.
- Provision for children in the early years is part-time in the Nursery and full-time in the Reception class.
- A children's centre is located within the school building. This is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - using assessments for writing and mathematics as precisely as they are used for reading, to identify pupils' needs and to plan challenging work
 - making sure that feedback to pupils always gives clear guidance about how they can improve their work and that pupils respond to this feedback appropriately, as required by the school's marking policy
 - using the most effective teaching as an example of best practice in order to improve the overall quality of teaching.
- Improve provision and children's achievement in the early years by:
 - providing relevant training for staff, to ensure consistently good teaching and continuous challenge for children, so that more achieve or exceed a good level of development
 - enhancing the links with the children's centre.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school provides well for pupils' well-being. Leaders have established a vibrant learning environment where pupils are kept safe and behaviour is good. Teaching is led and managed well. Pupils are taught effectively and as a result, they make good progress from their varying starting points.
- Relationships in the school are good. Staff present a strong role model for good relationships. Pupils learn well from the example set by staff members and are generally cooperative and respectful. Discrimination in any form is challenged. This too is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes and tolerance of others. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of leaders' and governors' commitment to pupils.
- Systems for managing teachers' performance are well established. Leaders' checks on teachers' performance are robust. These observations are helped by a programme of peer support, which encourages teachers to reflect on their work and discuss strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Support to help staff improve their practice is readily provided when needed. However, leaders acknowledge that the best teaching practice evident in the school is not as widely shared as it could be to aid an even better overall quality of teaching. Senior leaders are skilled in judging teaching and have an accurate view of its quality.
- Middle leaders manage an engaging curriculum for pupils well. They seized the opportunity to bring new ideas for learning when adapting the new primary curriculum. Pupils enjoy opportunities to use and develop their skills in different ways across subjects. Pupils' learning is enriched by a residential visit, theatre groups in school, visits to places of special interest and a good selection of after-school clubs.
- The physical education (PE) curriculum is a strong area of provision. Leaders use the allocated primary school sports funding very effectively. Sports coaches work daily with pupils and staff. Pupils' fitness and well-being benefit from a wide range of well-focused PE activities. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills are strengthened by working with these coaches. Less common, but nevertheless popular activities observed during the inspection were a visit from a professional boxer who put pupils through their paces with some 'boxercise' activities. Also, a 'Tour de Milefield' gave pupils the chance to ride their bicycles round a designated course in the school grounds. Pupils take part in competitive games against other school teams. A pupils' PE council makes sure that all interests are catered for well. Pupils are also encouraged to train as sports leaders.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of the multi-cultural nature of many modern British communities and have mature attitudes towards the rights of others. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities and enjoy contributing to the life of the school. Pupils learn to be reliable and fair-minded in their dealings with others. By the time they leave the school, they are well prepared in the values and social skills they will need for life in modern British society.
- The local authority provides effective support and works well with leaders to improve progress. The effects of this are recognised in the school's success in accelerating progress in all year groups over the current year. Leaders' capacity to sustain improvement is also recognised.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively. Governors review its use and impact regularly and ensure that all disadvantaged pupils have the support that they need to help them achieve well. The school's assessments show that previously identified achievement gaps between this group of pupils and others are closing quickly.
- Safeguarding measures meet all statutory requirements. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are robust. Staff are especially vigilant over use of the pathway which is shared by the children's centre and the school. This situation is reviewed regularly by the governing body.
- Effective systems to promote pupils' good attendance, including immediate checks on absences and some exciting incentives for pupils, have resulted in a rapid improvement in attendance rates. Attendance has risen from average to above average in the current school year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share the school's commitment to raising pupils' aspirations and their achievement. Governors know the school well. They understand the barriers to learning faced by some pupils and work determinedly to help those pupils overcome them. National assessment data is analysed closely to measure the school's performance in relation to others, and to question school leaders about trends in progress. Governors gain an understanding of teaching quality from their visits and walks around the school with senior staff. Teachers' performance reviews, presented by the headteacher, are checked by

governors against strict criteria for success when salary awards are considered. Financial management is efficient.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and work hard. They are pleasant and friendly in the dining room, for example, and enjoy one another's company in the playground.
- A small minority find it difficult to fully concentrate in lessons and a few sometimes speak out of turn. However, systems to manage pupils' behaviour are clear and effective. Pupils who need support are dealt with sensitively and learning is not interrupted. Serious behavioural incidents are rare and are well documented when they occur.
- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Their attendance has improved significantly. In the current academic year it has risen to above average, because of the steps taken by the school to remind pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils contribute a lot to the life of the school. In doing so they develop their own personal and social skills well. The school council, for example, is watchful over the quality of school meals and plays a part when new staff appointments are made. The PE council also gives all pupils a voice in school affairs. Some pupils take on caring roles as 'befrienders', while others train as sports leaders. Years 6 pupils carry out many tasks around the school, which help them to be responsible role models for others, as well as to raise their future aspirations.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say that they are cared for well. Their behaviour, they say, is good and that there is no bullying or any offensive name-calling.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take because of their anti-bullying work in school. They know about the dangers of the internet and other risks to their safety and are well informed about keeping themselves safe.
- A survey of parents' views, gathered by the school, overwhelmingly supports the view that their children are safe and that behaviour is good. A minority, however, express opposite views, via Parent View, which were not consistent with the school's survey, comments from parents spoken to during the inspection, or other inspection evidence. School staff and governors, work hard to encourage parents and strengthen the parent-school partnership.
- The care and safety provided for pupils, who because of their circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, is very good. Designated staff work effectively with a small number of pupils and families to make sure these pupils attend school, access their learning and have equal opportunities to achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching over time has led to pupils' good progress, which is consolidated in Years 1 to 6
- Teachers ensure that pupils are well equipped and prepared for lessons. This means no time is lost at the start of lessons and pupils can make good progress. Resources are used well, for example, pupils use hand-held computers routinely to help them learn.
- Teaching assistants work effectively during lessons and contribute well to pupils' learning. They know pupils well and are sensitive to their particular learning needs.
- Adults check pupils' progress in lessons effectively. They question pupils about their work and help them to correct mistakes before moving on. This support is less rigorous through marking, however. Pupils are not always challenged to correct errors, or guided sufficiently about how to do better. The result is, that sometimes mistakes are repeated and gaps remain in pupils' learning.
- Reading is taught well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs often make rapid progress in reading. This is because assessments of these pupils' skills are very precise and used well to plan learning tasks day-to-day in order to speed up individual pupils' progress. All pupils enjoy reading and

use their reading skills widely to find information during topic work and writing activities.

- Assessments based on teachers' regular checks of progress are accurate, and pupils achieve the challenging targets that are set for them at the end of each year. Although staff know pupils' abilities well, they do not assess individual pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics with the same precision as they do in reading.
- An increased focus on the teaching of basic spelling, punctuation and grammar has improved writing quality and boosted progress for most pupils in these aspects. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their writing skills through writing for different purposes and in different subjects.
- Pupils are taught number and calculation skills effectively, especially when tasks are linked to a current topic or story. Much good progress in mathematics was seen in lessons. Year 4 pupils, for example, enjoyed solving word problems related to fish, while pupils in Year 2 were given some exciting mathematics activities based on the story of Hansel and Gretel.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make up ground well from their lower than expected starting points. In the 2014 national phonics (letters and their sounds) screening check for Year 1 pupils, significantly more than half reached the expected standard which, nevertheless, is still below average. Most who did not reach the expected standard, caught up in Year 2. In the current Year 1, a higher proportion than previously is working at the expected level in phonics.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, is below average. However, from their starting points this group of pupils made good progress through Key Stage 1. School assessments, which are verified externally, indicate that this year pupils are making at least expected progress and a good number are achieving well through Key Stage 1. An increased proportion of pupils are achieving more than the targets set for them compared to previous years.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent cohorts have included significant proportions of pupils who have special educational needs, as well as some who joined the school part way through the year with low attainment. Some of the most able pupils left the school part way through the Key Stage 2.
- Although standards were below average in 2014, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who made expected progress in reading and writing was higher than the national average. In mathematics, the proportion making expected progress was average. The proportion who did better than expected in reading compared well with the national average. This represents good progress through Key Stage 2.
- The school's assessments for current Year 6 pupils show even better progress, from their starting points, compared with the previous year. Almost all pupils are achieving the challenging targets set for them in reading, writing and mathematics, and are making good gains in learning over time. A significant number of pupils, including some who speak English as an additional language or who have special educational needs, are doing better than expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are provided for well. They achieved well in 2014. Currently, because of the well-planned teaching and pastoral support they receive, they are making similarly good progress. The school works well with outside agencies to ensure pupils receive the precise help that they need. Careful assessment and good planning for their learning drives their good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points compared with other pupils nationally. National data for 2014 indicates that the attainment of pupils eligible for the additional funding was below that of others nationally in reading, writing by around two terms and by more than four terms in mathematics. When compared with others in the school, disadvantaged pupils' attainment was about a term ahead in reading and writing and about a term behind in mathematics. The school's assessment data for Year 6 shows that almost all disadvantaged pupils have met or exceeded targets for the current year and the attainment gaps are continuing to close quickly.
- The school ensures that the most able pupils achieve well. Those who achieved National Curriculum Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2011, in Year 6 have achieved Level 5, based on their unvalidated national test results. Those who have particular talents in sport have good opportunities and encouragement to develop their skills.

The early years provision**requires improvement**

- When children enter Nursery, almost all have basic skills that are much lower than those typical for their age.. There are significant gaps in children’s knowledge and understanding in the areas of communication and language, personal social and emotional development and mathematical understanding.
- Progress through the early years is not fast enough. By the end of the Reception Year in 2014, only half of the children achieved a good level of development in all areas of their learning. A much lower proportion than average of disadvantaged children, disabled children and those who have special educational needs made expected progress. This year children’s achievement is similar to that in 2014. Nevertheless, there is rising trend over time as the overall proportion of children who make expected progress increases.
- The school’s links with the children’s centre are weak. Leaders acknowledge that communications with children’s centre staff are not productive, and too many of the children who enter the Nursery class miss out on valuable pre-nursery experiences.
- Leadership in the early years requires improvement. The early years leader is newly in post but has quickly identified weaknesses and has realistic plans for improvement. However, as yet there has not been sufficient time for the appropriate actions to be put in place to bear fruit in good quality teaching and children’s higher achievement.
- Many of the early years staff are also relatively new in post. Consequently, their training needs are significant. Teaching requires improvement because staff do not as yet promote children’s rapid development in their communication and language skills. Much of children’s play has too little purpose. The way in which children’s progress is assessed and recorded are rightly identified by the early years leader as requiring improvement as a means of enhancing teaching and children’s achievement.
- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical strength and coordination in the well-equipped outdoor learning area. However, the development of their fine motor skills, needed for writing, for example, are not well enough promoted across the range of activities.
- Children’s behaviour and safety are well managed. They are kept safe and their personal welfare is given high priority. Overall, children behave well and cooperate with staff. Parents spoken with during the inspection are positive about the care provided for their children.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106617
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	449726

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	266
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave North
Headteacher	Paula Murray
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2010
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