

Millbridge Junior Infant and Nursery School

Vernon Road, Liversedge, West Yorkshire, WF15 6HU

Inspection dates 1–2 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Since the last inspection, the school has declined. Pupils' achievement has fallen and teaching has deteriorated.
- All groups of pupils across Years 1 to 6 make insufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This means the standards reached by the end of Year 6, given pupils' starting points, are too low.
- Teaching over time is inadequate. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are too low.
- Teaching does not always motivate or challenge pupils. Some pupils become disinterested in lessons, and their low level disruptive behaviour and lack of concentration, hinder the progress of others.
- The school's information shows that, while behaviour is improving, a large number of incidents have taken place since the beginning of the academic year.
- Attendance is below average. A high number of pupils are persistently absent.
- The school's ability to improve relies heavily on the work of the acting headteacher. The skills of other key leaders and managers are underdeveloped to bring about rapid change.
- Leaders have an inaccurate view of the school's performance. They do not review well enough pupils' progress over time, to determine how the school is performing. Actions to improve teaching are ineffective. Staff do not receive clear enough guidance on how to improve their teaching.
- Governors, do not have a good enough understanding of the quality of teaching, and how well different groups of pupils are doing; they do not hold the school to account well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good; consequently children achieve well.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and are well looked after by all of the adults.
- Staff ensure pupils from all different backgrounds are fully included in the school's activities.
- Staff want to improve and morale is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 20 different lessons, of which two were joint observations with the acting headteacher. Inspectors also observed the teaching of small groups of pupils outside lessons, and listened to pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons, and inspectors looked at a number of Year 6 pupils' English and mathematics books in detail, to gain evidence about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress over time.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own data on current pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governors' meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and school staff, including those with management responsibilities. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- The number of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) was too small to enable access for inspectors. Inspectors did evaluate the responses of parents and carers to a recent school questionnaire, alongside the views of 36 members of the school's staff in response to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Yvonne Brown

Additional Inspector

Lyn Field

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- A much larger than average proportion of pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after.
- Larger than average proportions of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly of Pakistani origin, and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, but the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below that found nationally.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a daily breakfast and after school club for a small number of pupils.
- There has been significant and recent change in the governance, leadership and management of the school. At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher were in place. The Chair of the Governing Body had been recently appointed, and temporary changes made to the school's senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6, so that it is good or better, to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by ensuring :
 - inadequate teaching is eradicated
 - all teachers have high expectations about what pupils can achieve
 - teachers plan challenging and exciting activities which provide the appropriate level of challenge for different groups of pupils that sustain their interest and concentration, so that pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are always good
 - teachers check pupils' learning and progress more accurately, mark their work more carefully to inform pupils what to do next to improve, and give them time to do so
 - teaching assistants know what is expected of them, and that their skills are developed so they can help pupils to learn effectively.
- Ensure pupils' achievement is good or better in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 6, by:
 - encouraging pupils to read more, in school and at home
 - developing younger pupils' understanding of letters and the sounds they make, and older pupils' skills in understanding, and deducing, what they have read
 - making sure pupils' mental calculation skills are practised daily
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and

to apply them in other subjects

- providing more opportunities for pupils to use a wide range of language when writing for different audiences, and in different subjects, and to improve pupils' accuracy in spelling and punctuating sentences.

■ Raise attendance and reduce persistent absence to at least the national averages, by:

- enforcing strongly the school's recently introduced guidance to parents not to take holidays during term time
- enhancing pupils' desire to attend school regularly through daily motivating and successful learning experiences.

■ Reduce considerably the number of incidents of pupils' misbehaviour by ensuring:

- all staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and enforce consistently the school's behaviour policy.

■ Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, by:

- building a robust senior leadership team, and developing the skills of other teachers with responsibilities so that they can help to drive improvements in their areas
- improving the tracking of pupils' progress so that the achievement of different groups of pupils can be identified more swiftly and the necessary actions taken to prevent them from falling behind
- making sure that leaders and all staff fully understand what constitutes good and better progress for pupils given their individual starting points
- checking more rigorously the quality of teaching and ensuring feedback to staff about how to improve their teaching and pupils' learning is clearer, and acted upon
- improving the governing body's knowledge of how well the school is doing, so that governors can hold leaders more rigorously to account for their performance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of the school's work may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Across Years 1 to 6, all groups of pupils underachieve in reading, writing and in mathematics. This is because of inadequate teaching over time and because of significant weaknesses in the school's systems for checking how well pupils are doing. For example, in 2013 by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards of attainment, especially in writing, were well below average having declined from their overall below average standards on starting the key stage.
- Information provided by the school, together with work seen in pupils' books and in lessons, confirms pupils' progress currently and their achievement over time is inadequate. Pupils are not learning securely enough in many classes. Although there is some quickening of learning due to improvements in the teaching of some staff, and the good teaching that exists in some years, many pupils have gaps in their learning because teaching over time has been inadequate. As a consequence, the school is resorting to too much boosting of pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' progress in reading is inadequate. Historically, there has been too little focus on developing pupils' knowledge of how letters are linked to sounds. Although much work has taken place recently to develop teachers' skills in this area, and some pupils are making better progress, many still struggle to read unfamiliar words. Only a very small minority reached the expected standard in the check of pupils' early reading skills at the end of Year 1, in 2013. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to read individually in school, and the numbers who read regularly at home are low. Reading records do not show enough progress in pupils' comprehension skills, and in their abilities to read between the lines of a story, and make deductions about the characters and plot.
- In mathematics, pupils make too little progress because they do not practise regularly enough basic mental calculations. Consequently, their ability to use simple mathematical skills is held back. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems set in real-life scenarios, and reinforce key number skills in different subjects.
- Pupils' writing skills are held back because they are not given enough opportunities to write for extended periods of time in subjects other than in English. Across Years 1 to 6, key skills in spelling and punctuation are not developed systematically enough. Many pupils cannot use the range of language that enables them to express confidently their views in formal and informal situations, and in different subjects.
- Across the school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do not make enough progress, especially in reading and writing, because support is not targeted well enough to meet their needs, and the effectiveness of teaching assistants in lessons is too variable. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also underachieve because often they are not sufficiently challenged, particularly in writing. The most able pupils underperform because they spend too much time completing similar work to their peers, and are not stretched with more challenging tasks soon, and often, enough.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium make inadequate progress. In many classes, gaps in reading, writing and mathematics are not closing rapidly enough. As a consequence, by the end of Year 6, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attain on average almost one national curriculum level less in reading and mathematics, and half a national curriculum level less in writing, than their peers.
- Because the different groups of pupils do not achieve as well as they ought, and overall pupils make inadequate progress compared to their peers nationally, the school's promotion of equal opportunities to learn is inadequate.
- Children enter the Nursery year with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, and in aspects of their personal development. They make good progress across the Nursery and Reception years, due to the good teaching. As a result, they enter Year 1 with much improved social and linguistic skills, albeit below national expectations.

The quality of teaching**is inadequate**

- Teaching over time has not been strong enough to ensure pupils make adequate progress. Although some teaching is good, too much requires improvement or is inadequate. Consequently the overall quality of teaching currently is not good enough to quickly speed up pupils' progress and make up for past underachievement.
- Teachers' planning of activities does not ensure learning is sufficiently challenging for all pupils. For example, in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, low attaining pupils spent too long drawing hands on clock faces to denote the hour, having mastered this concept. As one pupil said, 'once you've got it you don't need to keep going over it.' In the same lesson, some of the most able pupils were over challenged, showing confusion in drawing hands denoting quarter-past the hour, with half-past the hour.
- Too many pupils finish their work quickly because expectations of what different pupils are capable of achieving are too low. On other occasions, instructions are unclear, or activities have little relevance and are not motivating enough. At these times, pupils become easily distracted and bored, hindering their progress, and the learning of others. This was particularly the case in a Key Stage 2 information and communication technology lesson, where too few pupils managed to send a simple e-mail to their peers, in the time provided. Similarly, in a Key Stage 2 science lesson, some pupils spent too long retrieving equipment, without showing an eagerness to analyse the impact of different detergents on stains, while others, who had completed the experiment, were insufficiently stimulated to think about how they could record their findings.
- Too many teachers are unaware of how pupils' learning needs are changing, and show insufficient flexibility to re-shape the planned activities and experiences. Support provided by teaching assistants is too variable. They are not used to good effect during all parts of lessons. For example, when teachers are explaining work to their class, opportunities to support pupils' learning are overlooked. Few teachers communicate effectively with teaching assistants to check they are clear about how best to support targeted groups of pupils.
- The overall quality of teachers' marking is inadequate. Pupils do not receive clear enough guidance on the steps they need to take next in order to improve, or sufficient opportunities to correct their work the next time.
- Many teachers repeatedly set pupils a diet of mundane and unchallenging tasks in mathematics, so their ability to apply number skills, for example to solve problems, develops only slowly. Literacy skills have not been taught systematically enough so pupils have too many gaps in their learning, particularly in spelling, grammar and punctuation. The teaching of pupils to associate words with sounds is too variable. Pupils do not practise this skill enough in small groups, and individually, to become sufficiently confident in decoding unfamiliar words.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. This encourages pupils' personal and social development. Some teaching is good and enables pupils to learn well. In Year 5, the teacher's effective use of questioning in mathematics deepened pupils' understanding, and enabled them to gain a good understanding of how to find functions of different numbers. Some teachers inject enjoyment into learning, manage pupils' behaviour well, and challenge their thinking. They are beginning to make up for lost learning and past weak teaching.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall. This is because adults listen to children, and observe their responses to activities, carefully. They adapt generally well to children's different aptitudes and successes, and make learning fun. For example, in the Nursery, children enjoyed thoroughly reinforcing their knowledge of numbers from one to five through the imaginative decoration of Easter eggs. Teachers recognise that the impact of their work would be even greater, if outdoor learning resources were as exciting and varied, as those indoors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are inadequate**

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate over time. The school's records show a large proportion of recorded incidents of misbehaviour, in and out of lessons, since the beginning of the academic year. One in five parents, in a recent response to a school questionnaire, indicated concerns

about the behaviour of some pupils in school. More consistent approaches to the management of behaviour by all adults are starting to result in a reduction of behavioural incidents; behaviour seen around school during the inspection was generally good.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not always positive, especially where work is not set at the right levels, lacks challenge or fails to interest pupils. Although most pupils behave well in lessons and are quick to respond to teachers' instructions, there are regular instances of low-level disruption by a small minority. Pupils do not always settle down quickly to the planned activities and this means that valuable learning time is lost. The most able pupils say they have a desire for more challenge in their learning and say a few pupils misbehave in lessons because they are bored.
- Staff take a genuine interest in their pupils and ensure that those from different backgrounds play well together at break and lunchtimes, and socialise in a polite manner in the dining hall. In turn, pupils respond positively to the supportive relationships, and say how much they feel valued.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Although pupils' attendance has improved strongly of late, it is still below the national average. A high proportion of pupils, including those whose first language is not English, those with disabilities and special educational needs, and those eligible for support from the pupil premium fund, are persistently absent.
- Child protection policies and procedures are good. Staff training in keeping pupils safe is up-to-date, and staff are vigilant in ensuring the welfare of all pupils. As a consequence, the school's records show that bullying is rare.
- Pupils are proud of their school. The majority take pleasure in wearing the school uniform and help to keep classrooms and corridors tidy. Pupils are keen to talk about developments linked to fitness and healthy eating, and take seriously their roles as befrienders and school councillors.
- The breakfast club provides a healthy start to the day for the small number of pupils who use this facility. The after-school club offers a range of activities that interest pupils until they are collected by parents.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and managers have not checked rigorously enough the school's performance, since the last inspection and, as a result, pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching have declined.
- Within school, the present drive for improvement rests too heavily on the shoulders of the acting headteacher. There are too few permanent senior leaders in post. The acting headteacher has yet to ensure that other leaders and managers across the school are trained well enough so that they have the skills to check and challenge fully the school's performance, and to bring about the rapid improvements needed to teaching and learning.
- The school's current systems to check on pupils' levels of attainment and to track their progress are not being used rigorously enough. Leaders fail to check carefully enough how well pupils, including those from different groups, are performing. Furthermore, leaders do not have a good enough understanding of how much progress pupils are expected to make in order for them to achieve well. Consequently they do not have a clear enough view of the school's effectiveness and their view of it is far too generous.
- The school's evaluation of the quality of teaching, is similarly inaccurate and over generous. Arrangements to check and improve the quality of teaching lack rigour. Feedback given to teachers, resulting from observations of their teaching, does not make it clear enough how they need to improve their teaching and pupils' learning. This does not lead to better classroom practice. Weaknesses in teaching, therefore, such as work not being matched carefully enough to pupils' needs, teaching assistants not deployed to good effect, and pupils' not being provided with astute advice about what to do next to improve their learning and progress, have not been attended to vigorously enough.
- Although the local authority has brokered a great deal of support for the school from authority consultants, including lead practitioners in local outstanding schools, much of this support has

come too late to make a significant difference to the historical underperformance of pupils, in the short term.

- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.
- Over time, leaders and governors have not tackled weaknesses in teaching through robust performance management. Recently revised appraisal procedures are rigorous. Teachers are now set challenging targets, with appropriately targeted support. These new arrangements are holding teachers increasingly accountable for the school's outcomes. They have the potential to ensure that any pay increases in the future are merited, as a result of effective teaching.
- The curriculum provides a number of off-site visits, and beyond school learning experiences. These are enjoyed by pupils. Activities planned around topics such as African giant snails, Egypt, heroes and villains appeal to pupils' interests, but the curriculum does not adequately promote the development of pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, they are not prepared well enough for the next stage of education. Celebrations of festivals such as Christmas, opportunities to play sport and take part in gymnastics, as well as regular singing and the learning of French, contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The pupil premium funding is not used to good effect. Leaders and governors fail to review precisely the impact of additional teaching assistants, small group teaching and mentoring, in reducing gaps in pupils' progress and attainment.
- The new primary school physical education and sport funding is spent appropriately on staff training, with a range of coaches working alongside teachers to improve the teaching of gymnastics, and different sports. Additionally, specialist practitioners are funded to promote football, rugby and other sporting activities after school. Leaders and governors have yet to review the impact that this work is having on increasing pupils' participation in sport, on their health and fitness, and on teachers' confidence in teaching physical education.
- Parents are generally supportive of the school's work. Staff say how much they are committed to improving the school, how morale is strong, and how productive relationships are between the school and families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is ineffective. The governing body has not kept the performance of the school sufficiently in check since the last inspection. Governors have not challenged senior leaders sufficiently, and actions to improve the school have been ineffective. The governing body has undergone significant changes in the last few months. Many governors are new to the role and to the governing body. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been recently appointed. Governors have the will to succeed and are keen for the school to improve. However, many do not have experience of the role and still need to acquire knowledge in key areas. This includes checking the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. Governors do not know enough about this to hold leaders fully to account.
 - Governors have begun to visit the school and have been recently linked to individual subjects. Some have written reports, following visits, and these have been discussed at governors' meetings. However, overall, governors are too reliant on information given to them by the acting headteacher to form their view of the school's effectiveness. They have not yet received sufficient training, or put the processes in place, to check it well enough for themselves.
 - The governing body has recently established robust procedures to manage the performance of teachers so pay awards are now linked to pupils' progress.
 - Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements,
 - Governors know how the pupil premium and school sport funding are spent, but are unaware of the impact that the deployment of this funding is having on pupils' achievement, and staff confidence in teaching physical education.

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	107694
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	439672

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	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Uttley
Headteacher	Garry Johnson (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2011
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