

# Millbridge Junior Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107694
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	309477
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marie Cordey

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	324
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs J Bennett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Wathen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Vernon Road Liversedge West Yorkshire WF15 6HU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 325715
<b>Fax number</b>	01924 325716

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large school set in an area of mixed housing near to the town of Heckmondwike. More than twice the national average of pupils is eligible for free school meals. There are above average numbers of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language and an above average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has gained 'Investor in People' status.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Millbridge is a good and improving school. Standards have risen in the past two years and are now average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school from well below average starting points. This is because of the determination and vision of the headteacher with the support of all the staff. Good teaching engages the pupils well in their learning. Teachers set high expectations that motivate pupils to reach challenging targets. This has had a good impact overall in raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, especially in science. As a result, fewer pupils than expected reach above average standards in this subject. The school is working on this as a priority.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are happy in school and feel secure. The curriculum is broad and adapted well to meet the diverse needs of the pupils. Opportunities abound for pupils to develop their interests both in and out of school. Pupils are well looked after and cared for. Their confidence and self-esteem is nurtured and it shows in their poise and willingness to learn. Pupils learn to respect themselves and are sensitive and thoughtful towards others. The pupils' progress towards challenging targets is tracked very closely and underpins the rising standards. Any pupil who is not making expected progress is quickly identified and supported. Pupils are becoming more involved in setting their own targets, although some are not yet aware of how they are doing in their work or exactly what to do in order to improve it.

Parents are very pleased with the school and appreciate the difference it makes to their children's lives. Although a small number expressed concerns about behaviour, this was not found to be an issue during the inspection. Some previous issues with some challenging behaviour have been resolved and the school is a particularly calm and well-ordered place. Leadership and management are good. Leaders set a clear direction for improvement and raising standards whilst providing a background of care and support for each pupil. The governing body is very challenging in the way it holds the school to account to ensure it provides good value for money. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Inspectors agree with the evaluations the school has made on its performance. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to their learning and personal and social development. This is because of sharp and focused leadership and good teaching. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below the expectations for their age, especially in communication skills and mathematical development. They settle down quickly and happily into new routines and make good progress to reach standards that are just below those expected by the end of Reception. Their personal development and care, guidance and support are good. Children learn to speak more confidently, form good friendships and understand how to add small numbers. There is planned and effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children who are at an early stage of speaking English. Children learn to speak more fluently and recognise simple words. The good curriculum is enhanced by the regular use of the 'Forest School', an environmental project area that has improved children's

enjoyment of learning and their physical skills. There are limited opportunities for continuous learning in the outdoor areas as they are not weatherproof.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make sure the higher attaining pupils are always sufficiently challenged, particularly in science to improve standards.
- Ensure all pupils know how well they are doing in their work and what to do in order to improve it.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress from below average starting points. By the time they leave school in Year 6, standards are securely average. Pupils' reading, speaking and listening skills show significant improvement. This is because of careful planning and good opportunities for the pupils to read regularly, act in role and take part in purposeful discussions. Revised arrangements in science have resulted in much improved standards, although fewer pupils than expected reach the above average levels. The higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and have limited investigative skills. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English make good progress. This is because the pupils' needs are identified early and given tailored support by well-trained staff.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in school and pupils are polite and welcoming. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective in assemblies and lessons. They are tolerant and respectful of others and have a good social and cultural awareness. They have a clear sense of 'fair play' and recognise their importance as part of a community. Behaviour is good and pupils are responsible and sensitive to the needs of others. They feel that they are listened to and their opinions respected. They trust staff and approach them if they are troubled. The school works hard to promote good attendance and, as a result, it has improved to broadly average. The attendance of a very small number of pupils reduces the overall attendance figures and too many families take holidays in term time. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy the 'home cooked' meals which are nutritious and appealing. Pupils acquire the necessary skills in literacy and numeracy to help secure their future well-being. They learn how to manage money and are taught enterprise skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes account of pupils' interests. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils well. The pace of the lessons is good and pupils are actively involved in a range of interesting activities. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils enjoyed working in pairs to describe a complicated diagram so that their partner could draw it accurately unseen. Occasionally, expectations are not challenging enough to cater for the needs of the more able pupils, particularly in science. In some lessons there is an overuse

of commercial work sheets and this limits opportunities for pupils to personalize their work. Conscientious teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to refine their work until it is the best they can do. For instance, pupils in Year 6 worked hard to improve their descriptions of a Roald Dahl character, 'Mrs Pratchett' and were pleased with their ideas such as 'Her nails were brown and crispy like a snail's shell'.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well matched to the needs of its pupils. Subjects are now linked together more closely to make learning more relevant and exciting. This is particularly the case in French and in the pupils' direct involvement in learning in the 'Forest School'. Pupils talk enthusiastically about visits and visitors and the many sporting opportunities provided for them. The numerous well-attended extra-curricular activities develop the pupils' skills, talents and interest in learning. One of the most positive aspects of the curriculum is how it enhances the pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils become more independent, build their self-esteem and are confident young people because of a sharply focused personal, social and health education programme.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are appropriate and meet current requirements. The support for pupils' personal development is a particular strength. The learning mentor programme has made a significant contribution in supporting pupils who have social and emotional needs. The school's high expectations and its consistent focus on rewarding good behaviour are proving successful in creating a peaceful learning environment. There are very effective links with outside agencies, which contribute to the good care, health and welfare of all pupils. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils varies throughout the school. Some is of good quality and particularly helpful in guiding pupils to improve their work. Many teachers are beginning to give pupils more of a say in their learning by involving them in evaluating how well they are doing in their work. These positive features, however, are not yet consistent throughout the school. There are good arrangements in place to assess and track pupils' progress. The systems to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well planned and effective in guiding their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders provide a firm base for school improvement. The team approach involves all staff in the school's vision of creating a haven for pupils where they can thrive and achieve well both personally and academically. Challenging targets are set to raise the expectations of pupils and this has led to improved standards in all subjects. The expectations for higher attaining pupils, particularly in science, are not always as assured and the school has developed new strategies to improve standards further. These are already having a positive impact on pupils' performance in English and mathematics. Staffing changes have been well managed and new staff are making

a good contribution to the pupils' well-being and raising their achievement. The school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for the way you welcomed us when we came to your school. You were keen to speak to us and showed us how polite and well behaved you are. The best things about your school are the improvements in your work and your pleasure in being at school. You all look after each other and work hard in your lessons. You enjoy learning when you are involved and active such as when you go on woodland walks. You are well looked after and cared for by all the adults in your school. It was very nice for us to see how much you enjoy yourselves.

We think that those pupils who learn quickly could be challenged more to help them improve their work, especially in science. We also think that you all need to know exactly how you are doing in your work and what you could do to make it better. We want you to help your teachers by sharing your ideas on how you can improve even more. We are sure that you will do this and wish you all the very best for the future.