

Milverton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125610
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	340803
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marianne Talbot
Headteacher	Ben Wilde
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with staff, the chair of governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies, planning, assessment information, examples of pupils' work and 59 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well pupils did in the most recent national tests and how well standards have improved since the last inspection
- the strengths in the teaching, especially in how teachers help boys to achieve so well
- the development and use of success criteria in lessons and how this has helped pupils' learning
- the impact of the innovative work in developing a creative curriculum and partnerships.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school. The proportion of the pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but a slightly above average number are from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups, with few who have English as an additional language. The main other heritages represented are Other White and Indian. The school has a stable population and few pupils join or leave at times other than normal. The school has achieved Activemark and Healthy Schools awards, an International School award and is part of a Creative Partnerships programme. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 and their teachers were on a residential visit to Wales. There is a privately run nursery on the school site; this is inspected and reported on separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils are well taught, exceptionally well cared for and achieve above average standards. Parents and pupils speak of how happy they are with the school. As one parent said: 'This is a wonderful school that feels like one big family' and one younger pupil commented that it is 'a joyful place.'

There have been some major improvements since the last inspection. The teaching has improved and lessons have more pace and are sufficiently challenging. This has come about partly through the effective use of success criteria which help pupils understand what they are learning and how well this has been achieved. In addition standards in writing have improved as a result of the excellent and more creative curriculum changes. These are some of the school's other major strengths.

- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average and pupils have very good speaking skills.
- Boys make especially good progress and do better than most boys nationally.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding.
- The school keeps pupils exceptionally safe through its rigorous procedures and policies, and offers the pupils excellent care, guidance and support.
- The school has an imaginative, creative and very effective curriculum which provides pupils with some memorable experiences.
- The headteacher and governing body provide the school with a clear ambition to provide the best education possible for all pupils.

The many improvements made since the last inspection have resulted in rising standards. This is evident in the excellent leadership of teaching and learning which is having a very positive impact on raising standards and improving the quality of learning. This shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school's own evaluation of its performance has improved and staff are more aware of the progress pupils are making and of the outcomes of their teaching. Teachers have a genuine willingness to hear how they can improve their work for the benefit of their pupils. The school also has a positive willingness to look beyond its four walls for support, advice and guidance. Staff have a clear willingness to innovate and try new ideas, particularly evident in the creative curriculum and enrichment activities.

The school improvement and development plan contains a very good list of priorities to help the school improve based on its honest and accurate self-evaluation. In

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addition the inspection highlighted some inconsistency in the setting of targets for individuals and groups. The marking of pupils' work also varies in quality and teachers do not always help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. Although there is good provision in the Reception classes, the use of the outdoor space is not as well planned for as the indoor areas. The staff also do not have a sufficiently accurate view of pupils' attainment on entry to the school. This is partly because they do not carry out sufficiently robust on-going assessment activities such as focused observations in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In the Early Years Foundation stage:
 - develop more planned opportunities for outdoor learning
 - improve the accuracy of the assessment of children when they join the school and of their progress.
- Improve the consistency of pupil progress in learning by:
 - ensuring agreed approaches to marking help pupils understand their next steps and are applied throughout the school
 - identifying targets for improvement for individuals and groups, based on on-going assessments.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Standards throughout the school are consistently above those expected in many subjects. Pupils achieve well and demonstrate real enjoyment of the challenging lessons and of school life in general. These high standards come about through good quality teaching and are often the result of some creative and enriching activities. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 5 dressed in wartime clothing and were able to meet a survivor of the Coventry blitz to learn about life during the war from first hand experience. This resulted in some genuine feelings of awe and empathy. Test results have been consistently above average over time in both key stages. This is supported by pupils' work observed during the inspection. By the time pupils reach Year 6, their writing is mature and often interesting. Standards in mathematics have been weaker than in English. After analysis the school realised that pupils were not transferring their number skills to real life problems. Work to address this has been put in place, including a week-long project involving money and mathematical problem solving, and this has already had a positive impact on standards. In recent years the progress pupils have made has slowed as they move from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. The school has recognised this and, having changed some staffing and organisation of classes, is closely monitoring the current progress so that this dip does not remain.

It is noticeable in test results how well boys achieve. This is different from the national picture. Boys have typical levels of attainment on entry to the school but make good and sometimes excellent progress. This success is the result of a range of factors including supportive parents, practical and interesting activities in school and a culture which celebrates all types of achievement. Pupils show pride in their learning and this

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is evident in the neat and careful presentation of their work in books.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and they behave well. Their good basic skills prepare them well for the next stage in their education, and the school's focus on developing their learning skills is having a good and growing impact on preparing them for their future lives. Pupils are able to explain how safe they feel. This is because of their respect for, and trust in, adults in school. In addition, the school teaches them to keep themselves safe when, for example, using busy local roads or when using the internet. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to take part in decision making and helping others in school, in the local cluster of schools and in the local community. The school council is a very effective body and the school ensures pupils are fully involved in decisions such as that regarding the swimming pool.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

All the staff who completed a questionnaire said they felt proud to be a member of this school. This is also evident in their day-to-day work and in their very strong relationships with the pupils. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers work extremely hard to create interesting and meaningful activities. This results in very positive responses, such as in the enthusiasm shown by Year 3 and 4 pupils bringing books and artefacts from home to support their learning about Ancient Egypt. The good teaching ensures pupils are engaged and motivated. Teachers plan well and the work is often well

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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matched to pupils' prior learning. However, teachers do not always ensure their marking consistently helps pupils understand how to improve and the targets set are often too wide to be helpful to individuals or to be easily measured. Even so, day-to-day assessments in lessons are carried out well and many pupils have good opportunities for helping each other improve their work through sharing good ideas. Teaching assistants provide some very good support, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Occasionally, teachers do not make best use of their time in whole-class sessions.

The good teaching is supported by the excellent curriculum. The provision of specific events such as week-long or day projects keeps all pupils interested and enthusiastic about learning. These also enable them to focus on a particular topic, such as finance or science, for an extended period of time. The innovative and creative nature of the work is exciting and results in at least good progress. The focus on ways of learning is helping pupils develop excellent skills such as co-operation, collaboration and negotiation. The school's creative partnership work has clearly had a positive impact on pupils' writing skills, especially in Key Stage 1. As one parent reported, it has 'fuelled their love of writing at home.'

This is an exceptionally caring and supportive school that provides its pupils with a safe, exciting environment in which to grow and learn. The school's nurture provision for pupils who are most vulnerable or who have learning or physical difficulties is excellent. An excellent example of the school's caring nature is the way staff recognised some pupils were missing out on after school clubs, found out why, and solved the issue.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has an openness and willingness to learn from good practice elsewhere and to innovate in order to provide the best for its children. This strong leadership begins with the knowledgeable and very involved governing body and continues down through the headteacher to the strong senior leadership team. Governors and senior leaders provide the school with agreed, well thought out and very strong strategic direction. The links between governors and curriculum or other leaders are strong. This helps the governing body keep a firm and accurate track on how well the school is performing to enhance its ability to hold the school to account. The school's focus on continual improvement is the result of an ambition evident since

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the last inspection to improve the outcomes for pupils still further. The school works extremely hard and very thoughtfully to ensure excellent equal opportunities for all its pupils. Pupils are emphatic that there is no discrimination in any aspect of the school's work. This is evident in, for example, the proactive way staff addressed perceived unfairness in who attended after school clubs. The most vulnerable are outstandingly well catered for and they make good progress as a result. Where any underachievement or other weaknesses are identified the staff work hard to correct this. This excellent provision is ensured through careful analysis of data and the checking of pupils' progress to highlight any underachievement. The strength of this work, and its impact on the rising standards, reflects the outstanding leadership and management of teaching and learning. Leaders ensure that teachers take part in appropriate professional development. The ensuing good practice is disseminated well throughout the school. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate and extensive, and has resulted in outstanding improvements to individual teachers' practice. The deployment of staff is thoughtfully done and is having a positive impact. The views of parents and carers, and of pupils, are sought regularly and on important issues, as has recently happened with the decision about the future of the swimming pool.

The outstanding safeguarding arrangements ensure that all requirements are rigorously met, including those for the safe recruitment and checking of staff. Risk assessments are rigorous. The school has recently audited its provision for community cohesion and recognised the school's positive work in the local community. Helped by the school's links with a school in Ghana, pupils have a good knowledge of how peoples in other countries live. However, their understanding of how different communities in other parts of this country live is less secure.

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	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	1
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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

From their attainment on entry to the school, which is largely typical for their ages, children make good progress and by the end of the Reception year most are working at or beyond the expected levels in all six areas of learning. They make particularly good progress in developing personal and social skills and this is evident in their interest in the activities provided for them, and the independence they show in accessing and tidying resources. Their skills in writing and listening remain weaker but their speaking skills are well above those typical for their ages.

The teachers have provided a stimulating indoor environment together with a wide variety of activities to promote children's learning successfully. Teaching is good and open to new practices such as the recently developed learning record books. To date, staff have relied too much on others' assessments made before children started school rather than conducting their own assessments sufficiently early in the year to check on early progress. The planning does not sufficiently highlight the use of the outdoor area or of opportunities for focused observations and other assessment activities. Overall, however, the Early Years Foundation stage is well led and managed, links with parents are very strong and children have a good start to their education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They are especially positive about how well their children enjoy school, how well the school is led and managed, and the caring nature of the school. Those with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are particularly positive about how well their children are provided for, and the inspection evidence supports this. A small number of parents had concerns about behaviour but the inspection showed that any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively. Other parents new to the school spoke enthusiastically about how well their children had been integrated and settled.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Milverton 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 321 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	71	17	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	73	16	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	30	51	27	46	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	56	25	42	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	66	18	31	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	36	61	22	37	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	61	23	39	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	47	27	46	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	33	56	24	41	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	47	26	44	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	53	24	41	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	45	76	14	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	47	80	11	19	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 all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously. The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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 pupils' 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.



11 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Milverton Primary School, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 6ES

I am writing to thank you for welcoming us to your school recently and for the help you gave us during the two days we spent with you. We enjoyed meeting you and found many of you to be very articulate. You were very positive about how much you enjoy being at the school and the opportunities you have to learn. We were very impressed with the outstanding levels of care, guidance and support the school provides for you.

These are some of the things we especially liked.

- You make good progress and reach above average standards by the time you leave the school.
- You have good teachers who work very hard to help you to learn. They ensure that all of you have equal opportunities to be successful.
- Most of you attend school regularly and behave very well – this helps you learn.
- The school is continually looking to improve, bringing new and interesting ideas into the excellent curriculum.
- The school is exceptionally successful at looking after you, keeping you safe and in helping you enjoy school.
- The leadership of the headteacher and governing body ensure a firm focus is kept on teaching and learning.

To help make the school even better we have asked staff to improve the use of the school's outdoor spaces, especially for the youngest children. We have also asked teachers to improve how they record what they learn. In all classes teachers need to improve the marking of your work so they can set accurate targets to help you understand exactly what you need to do to improve.

We are sorry we did not have the opportunity to meet pupils in Year 6 and their teachers but we did enjoy looking at some of your very good work. Enjoy your time at Milverton and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms
Lead inspector

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