

# Inspection of a good school: Millbrook Primary School

Elmfield, Shevington, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 8DL

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2022

## Outcome

Millbrook Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They talked with enthusiasm about the range of interesting outdoor learning activities that leaders provide for them, for example developing the bee garden. Pupils install plants that attract bees and butterflies. They have also harvested honey. Pupils spoke with pride about making bird houses and a bug hotel, and about growing fruit.

Pupils behave well. They said that there is some name-calling. However, pupils feel safe in school. They were confident that leaders would sort out any incidents of bullying well. Through their swimming lessons, pupils learn how to stay safe in and around water.

Pupils make a full contribution to school life. They enjoy the many jobs that they have in school, such as junior governors.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, staff expect that every pupil should be able to read with fluency and confidence. Pupils meet these high expectations and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the inspiration days. One of these had a focus on jobs and careers. Pupils were excited to meet television professionals to find out about careers in the media.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have put in place an ambitious and well-designed curriculum that reflects the school's aim to 'teach to the top'. Staff ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, have the support that they need to achieve well. Leaders have given careful thought to the small steps in learning that pupils should make as they progress through the curriculum, starting in the Reception class. However, in Nursery Year, leaders have given less thought to the important learning that children need in order to be ready for their learning in the Reception class and beyond.

Leaders ensure that reading takes a high priority. This begins in Nursery Year, where children enjoy listening to books and stories. Children in the Reception class gain the knowledge of phonics that they need in order to read.

In each class, staff make sure that the books that pupils read match their reading knowledge. This helps pupils to read fluently. Staff make sure that pupils read with expression. Pupils make effective use of punctuation when they read aloud. Staff have a strong focus on making sure that anyone who finds reading difficult is given effective support to read well. Pupils read widely and often. The libraries are inviting and attractive spaces. Pupils take on the job of organising them. They recommend books for others to read. Staff inspire and excite pupils about books through their animated telling of stories. However, pupils' knowledge of poets and poetry is not secure. The English curriculum does not develop pupils' knowledge of poetry as well as it should.

From the Reception class to Year 6, staff use assessment well to gauge what pupils can remember. Staff revisit previously taught knowledge. They adjust their lessons to make sure that pupils have the knowledge that they need. Staff break important learning down effectively into smaller steps for pupils with SEND. Teachers use demonstrations and explanations well to teach important knowledge. Pupils have a secure memory of what they have been taught. Children in Reception, term by term, increase their knowledge across each area of learning. They are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have an effective system for identifying pupils with SEND. They work in close partnership with parents and carers to help with this identification. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND study the full curriculum. These pupils achieve well across the different subjects.

Pupils value school and attend well. Most of the time, teachers can get on with their lessons because pupils behave well. In story time, for example, pupils sit captivated as they listen to stories. Pupils are keen to give their ideas and answers. However, at times, pupils' concentration sometimes wavers.

Staff plan a range of trips and visits to add breadth to the curriculum. For instance, pupils sing at a regional concert hall. Staff develop pupils' understanding of how to be healthy. They show pupils how to cook healthy food. Staff teach pupils about democracy, laws and human rights. Pupils learn to appreciate and celebrate differences. However, despite this, pupils reported some use of racist and homophobic terms.

The school is well led and managed. Governors are improving their knowledge of the curriculum. Leaders make sure that staff have a manageable workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff can identify any pupils at risk of harm. They update staff's knowledge about safeguarding throughout the year. Staff are alert to any safeguarding incidents. Leaders manage safeguarding cases well. They follow up any incidents with

determination. Leaders work well with health and other services, such as the police and social care.

Staff help pupils to be safe. Pupils learn how to ride their bicycles on roads. They have a good understanding of how to be safe when online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have not set out the small steps in learning that children should make in the Nursery class. This means that the children are not well prepared for the Reception curriculum. Leaders, including subject leaders, should identify the important knowledge in each area of learning that they want children to know in order to be ready for Reception. They should ensure that children learn this important knowledge in well-ordered steps.
- Poetry is underdeveloped in the curriculum. This means that pupils cannot recall any famous poets or any poems. Leaders should identify the poems and poets that they want pupils to learn about. They should ensure that pupils build their knowledge of poems and poets as they progress through the school, so that their learning is secure.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2013.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106436
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226122
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	204
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Gerard Hurst
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Tomlinson (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.millbrook.wigan.sch.uk">www.millbrook.wigan.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation. The other school in the federated partnership is Shevington Vale Primary School.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider.
- Governors manage a before- and after-school club on site. They also manage a nursery on site.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with two representatives of the local authority. He spoke with a teacher at the alternative provision.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in geography, mathematics and early reading. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at how the school checks adults' clearance to work with children and pupils. He looked at some case studies of social services referrals. The inspector looked at some records of pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector visited breaktimes and met with groups of pupils. He spoke with the executive headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the manager of the Nursery class and with the early years leader.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included some free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Allan Torr, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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