

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs K Leggett
Headteacher
Milford School
Church Road
Godalming
Surrey
GU8 5JA

Dear Mrs Leggett

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 7 November 2013 to look at work in English.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with you, your English subject leader and your deputy headteacher and a group of pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; a walk around the school with your English subject leader to discuss the school's work in English; and observation of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English requires improvement.

Achievement in English requires improvement.

- Attainment at the end of Year 2 declined from 2010 to 2012. In 2013 this decline was reversed and pupils' achievement was above the national average in reading and writing. The school's own data show that, overall, current Year 2 pupils are in line to achieve levels of attainment that are broadly in line with those found nationally.
- Pupils enjoy learning in reading and writing. They are developing their knowledge of the sounds letters make (phonics), although at present the large size of the groups impedes the progress of some pupils.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is inconsistent and some groups of pupils do not make sufficient progress. The school is implementing strategies to increase rates of pupils' progress, particularly for pupils with

special educational needs and those in receipt of additional government funding through the Pupil Premium.

Teaching in English requires improvement.

- During this inspection all lessons were observed jointly with you. The judgements were agreed. At present, teaching is not consistently good enough to enable all groups of pupils to make at least expected progress or for a significant proportion of pupils to make better than expected progress.
- Assessments of pupils' knowledge and skills in reading and writing take place regularly. However, teachers are not using this information well enough to identify gaps in pupils' learning. They are therefore not adjusting their planning or planning activities with sufficiently clear and detailed guidance and support to enable all groups of pupils to learn at a faster rate.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to engage pupils in learning. Pupils share their ideas in pairs and groups well. Learning support assistants help pupils to successfully complete activities. Relationships are good and pupils behave well in lessons.

The curriculum in English is good.

- Senior leaders have designed an interesting and stimulating curriculum, taking advantage of pupils' interests. The current theme of 'Here, there and everywhere' is well-planned to provide a wide range of interesting activities which enthuse and excite pupils and support their learning well. Year 2 pupils, for example, enjoyed writing instructions to make a soup with some 'unusual' ingredients for one of the rainforest animals.
- Effective use is made of visits and visitors. Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the cinema as part of National Film week, to see *Chimpanzee*, a film about an orphaned chimpanzee called Oscar.
- The recent visit from the 'Rainforest Road Show' captivated pupils' imagination. They talked with excitement and enthusiasm about the creatures they observed during the visit.

Leadership and management of English are requires improvement.

- Senior leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas to develop in reading and writing. Expectations have been raised and there is clarity of purpose. Staff work well together. Recent new approaches - for example, the new handwriting style - are at an early stage of development. Evidence of the impact of new strategies is beginning to be seen in pupils' writing.
- The English subject leader has developed a suitable action plan to steer the school towards improving pupils' progress. However, the plans do not

identify points at which expected levels of attainment and progress will be measured to check that actions taken are having a positive impact

- Assessment systems are in place, but leaders are not analysing the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils with sufficient precision to enable them to plan strategies to accelerate pupils' progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- using assessment information more effectively to identify gaps in pupils' learning and adjust planning and teaching to address these gaps and meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils
- making more effective use of pupils' progress data to track and analyse the progress of all groups of pupils
- regularly comparing the expected and the actual progress of pupils as part of your strategic planning, linking planned interventions more precisely to the impact the actions are expected to have on increasing rates of pupils' progress.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector