

Milverton House School

Park Street, Attleborough, Nuneaton, CV11 4NS

Inspection dates

24–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness

Good

2

Achievement of pupils

Good

2

Quality of teaching

Good

2

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Outstanding

1

Leadership and management

Good

2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and their attainment is above average, allowing many to go on to the secondary schools of their choice.
- Teachers have high expectations, supporting and challenging pupils to fulfil their potential.
- Pupils are extremely committed to and engaged in their work so that no time at all is lost to learning as a result of poor behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school and the supportive environment helps them to do their best.
- Leadership is focused on enabling the school to fulfil its main aim of successfully preparing its pupils for their secondary school careers, with many being successful at Common Entrance or in gaining scholarships.
- Teachers are valued and supported by the leadership. This has improved teaching and raised achievement since the last inspection.
- Many pupils enjoy the chance to join in a range of clubs and activities that widen their learning opportunities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information on pupils progress is not used well enough to set challenging individual learning targets or to analyse the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are not regular enough to make sure teachers improve their practice even more or to inform precisely what training and support they need.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- Sixteen lessons were observed, including a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior staff, and a telephone discussion was held with the proprietor.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 25 responses to the on-line Parent View survey.
- A meeting was held with representative pupils and inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection in order to gather their views.
- A high proportion of the staff completed the staff questionnaire and spoke with inspectors and their views have also been taken into account.
- Pupils' work was looked at during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of a sample of pupils' written work. Groups of pupils read to the inspectors.
- A range of written evidence was scrutinised, including evidence about the progress made by pupils, teachers planning and marking, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Richard Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Milverton House School is a day school that provides full-time education for 159 boys and girls between the ages of three and 11. The school also has an Early Years registration at a different site, which is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- The school is owned by an individual proprietor, with the day-to-day running and organisation of the school in the hands of the headteacher.
- It is a preparatory school that seeks to prepare its pupils for entry to independent or grammar schools, with some going on to maintained secondary schools, at the age of 11.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well below that found generally. No pupils currently have a statement of special educational needs.
- Students come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, although none speak English as an additional language.
- The school was last inspected in November 2008.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the use of information now being collected on each pupils' progress to:
 - set challenging individual targets for every pupil
 - allow the school to gain a more complete picture by looking at the progress made by different groups of pupils as well as that made by individuals.
- Develop more effective systems for monitoring classroom performance to:
 - support a fuller programme of appraisal that includes annual performance objectives to address individual and whole school development needs
 - promote more professional development opportunities for staff that meets individual needs.

Inspection judgements

Achievement of pupils

Good

- Pupils achieve well and attainment is above average, supported by effective teaching. Good progress through the school is reflected in the range of skills, including those of reading, writing, communication and mathematics, demonstrated by pupils.
- They also demonstrate a positive enjoyment through participating in a range of artistic activities, such as music, drama and art, which reflects a wider commitment to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children first enter the Early Years Foundation Stage displaying the knowledge, skills and understanding that are at least typical of that age. By the time they start Year 1 virtually all have reached or surpassed the full range of Early Learning Goals, which means they have achieved at least a good level of development. As a result all children are very well prepared for more formal ways of learning because of effective teaching.
- By the time they leave for secondary school virtually all reach the levels expected of pupils at that age, with high numbers doing better than this in English and mathematics. This year nearly a quarter of the Year 6 pupils are performing at the level more commonly expected of 14 year olds in mathematics. Good quality teaching prepares pupils well for secondary education, many being successful in Common Entrance examinations, or in gaining scholarships.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given good support. Individual education plans identify specific needs and set goals that can be measured so that their progress is monitored effectively. As a result they make good progress from their individual starting points.
- The most able are also challenged to fulfil their potential. Extension work is usually challenging, as seen in some project work that allowed such pupils to undertake elements of individual research.
- Reading is a prominent feature of school life and some parents volunteer to come into school to hear pupils read to them. The youngest pupils are well prepared for reading through the effective teaching of phonics (the understanding of letters and the sounds they make).
- Teachers record the progress of their pupils each February and July and have a clear picture of the level at which each is performing. However they do not use this to set challenging targets to help maximise progress. The school does not use the information to look at the progress of identified groups, although there is no evidence that any one group performs less well than another.

Quality of teaching

Good

- Teaching is good because it engages pupils, making them successful and enthusiastic learners in all areas including reading, writing and mathematics. This is an important element in motivating pupils to want to learn. As a result, the large majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and so make good progress. The special educational needs coordinator works closely with parents, teachers and pupils to complete individual education plans which have clear and measurable targets that are reviewed termly and revised as necessary.
- The most able are also well supported because teachers know that they are reaching higher levels and so prepare work that is suitably challenging. Often these pupils are really well motivated because teachers provide them with stimulating work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage some teaching is outstanding. All the learning and developmental requirements are met. Children's learning is well supported by good facilities that include a range of equipment and resources that engage children in the classroom and the designated outside area. Over time there is a movement away from child-initiated play to adult-led learning.
- Throughout the school there are high expectations, reinforced by good support from the school's leadership. Pupils make the most progress when teachers ask good questions which get lively responses. It shows they understand their work but also stimulates effective discussion. Pupils are fully engaged in learning and enjoy their lessons very much. Learning proceeds at a fast pace and pupils sustain their interest, because activities are well planned.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively. At the same time wider learning opportunities, including creative subjects such as music and art, are taught well. This means that pupils become well-rounded learners, developing a breadth of knowledge.
- Marking is undertaken regularly and this gives teachers a clear picture of progress being made by each pupil through the year. The best offers not only praise for good work but also suggests ways in which it might be further improved.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils work extremely hard and there is a real love of learning. This supports the strong progress and high standards that are seen throughout the school. It also means that no time is lost to learning because of poor behaviour.
- These positive attitudes are seen across the school and in all areas of learning. This includes sporting, artistic and creative areas. Opportunities to learn to play instruments or take part in drama activities are reflections of the strong commitment to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It was delightful to hear Year 1 pupils fully engaged in a French lesson in which very little English was spoken.
- Around the school, behaviour is equally positive. The whole school reflects the highest standards of a community in which adults provide strong role models. The positive attitudes creates an environment in which bullying cannot thrive, although pupils are very aware of what bullying is in its different forms because it is a topic they cover.
- Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Pupils develop a very positive respect for different traditions, communities and religions, which was reflected in some of the discussions held with pupils. They are well prepared for life in modern British society as self-confident and self-aware young citizens. They also have a developing awareness of public institutions and services, and the importance of democratic rights and responsibilities.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding, a view overwhelmingly shared by parents. From the start the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully met. Feeling safe helps pupils become confident learners.
- Pupils greatly enjoy their education and attendance is high because they love being in school. The excellent behaviour is reflected in the fact that there have been no exclusions.
- When trips and visits are planned the risk assessments carried out ahead of the activity are rigorous. In school all the necessary safety checks of equipment are undertaken and the premises and accommodation support good quality education.

Leadership and management

Good

- The leadership of the school creates an atmosphere in which learning can thrive and pupils can do their best. The proprietor, although not directly involved in the day-to-day running, has a clear view of a school where all are encouraged to do well in a supportive 'family' atmosphere. The headteacher leads a committed team of staff to put this into practice.
- The deputy headteacher and the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage provide good support in completing the leadership team, with the deputy headteacher also taking the leading role for safeguarding, which is effective. All leaders demonstrate high expectations. There are currently no 'middle leaders' with responsibilities for specific subjects, or similar.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage very effective leadership carefully tracks the progress of every child and ensures that teaching supports rapid progress because it meets individual needs. Tracking and monitoring are highly effective.
- Elsewhere, the curriculum is broad and based around the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is well thought out and helps pupils develop a love of learning and make progress in all areas. Because teachers know the level at which each of their pupils is working they can pitch work at a level that challenges, while not being too difficult. Learning is reinforced and promoted through a wide range of wider opportunities. These include trips, including residential opportunities in France.
- Self-evaluation leads to the school being able to plan for its development. Priorities can therefore be identified for helping the school to develop into the future.
- Care is taken to ensure that welfare, health and safety are never compromised. Similarly it allows the school to consider future plans confident that the school's finances are healthy and managed well.
- Leadership is not yet outstanding because arrangements for monitoring the performance of teachers are not fully developed. For example, the leadership is not fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of each teacher that would be gained from observing them. This then hinders the implementation of robust arrangements for annual target setting to improve teachers' practice, and better professional development and support for staff.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	125789
Inspection number	443471
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This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Day
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Simon Chamberlain
Headteacher	Oliver Pipe
Date of previous school inspection	November 2008
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,270
Telephone number	0247 664 1722
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