

Millfield L.E.A.D. Academy

Hat Road, Leicester, LE3 2WF

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get a good start in the Reception class. Activities are well-designed to help them develop their skills and they make good progress.
- Pupils throughout the academy make good progress in reading writing and mathematics. Improved progress in recent years means that standards are rising.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They constantly check how pupils are doing and make sure that the work helps them achieve well.
- Activities are exciting and interesting and ensure that pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They understand how well they are doing and know when to ask for more support so that they can develop new skills.
- Pupils behave well in and around the academy. They are polite and helpful to adults and each other. Older pupils look out for younger ones and help new children in the Reception class settle in.
- Pupils feel safe in the academy and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- The academy is well-led by the headteacher and senior leaders who, together, have made clear improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement. Pupils' progress is rigorously tracked and any in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and helped to keep up.
- The governors ask senior leaders challenging questions to make sure that the academy is improving. Governors also visit regularly to see for themselves how well the academy is developing.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given very good support and is a particular strength of the academy.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While most teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work, occasionally marking in some classes is not precise or regular enough.
- Some senior leaders are new to the post and have not yet fully developed the skills they need to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 33 lessons or parts of lessons, seven of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, three groups of pupils, the executive headteacher of the academy trust and two governors.
- Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 32 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, the academy’s own parental questionnaires, individual communications from parents and the 10 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the academy’s work and reviewed a range of documentation, including the academy’s checks on its performance, its analysis and tracking of pupils’ progress, records of behaviour and safety, academy improvement plans, records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance, safeguarding arrangements and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils’ work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Geoff Pettengell	Additional Inspector
Sarah Chadwick	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school and takes pupils from age four, when children join the Reception class, to 11 years old.
- Millfield Community School and Centre joined the L.E.A.D. (Lead, Empower, Achieve, Drive) academy trust in January 2013. It is a sponsor-led academy.
- Most pupils are White British. The largest proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is Indian. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are currently supported at school action plus is average. A below average proportion are supported with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The proportion supported at School Action is below average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that:
 - all teachers regularly give pupils precise guidance on how they can improve their work and check that they act on it.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that all leaders, but particularly senior and middle leaders who are new in post, develop the skills they need to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have both improved considerably over recent years. He and the assistant headteachers use academy achievement data rigorously to check how well pupils are doing. They make sure that any pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly helped to keep up.
- The academy has used the pupil premium funding particularly well to support pupils' progress. Gaps between the attainment of eligible pupils and others in the school are closing steadily in both English and mathematics.
- Leaders hold teachers accountable for the progress of pupils in their class and arrangements for checking teachers' performance have contributed to good teaching across the academy. Individual targets are used by the headteacher and the governing body to judge whether pay rises and promotion are justified by results. The academy promotes equality of opportunity well and makes sure that no groups of pupils achieve less well than others.
- All senior leaders regularly help other teachers to develop their skills and expertise. Some leaders, including some senior and middle leaders, however, are new in post and so have not yet fully developed skills to make judgements about the quality of teaching and drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The curriculum is exciting and interesting and develops pupils' literacy, numeracy and communication skills in different subjects very well. Pupils from the school council contribute their ideas about which themes they will study during the year. This helps to make the subjects relevant and pupils enjoy their learning. For example, in Year 6, pupils were fascinated to learn about the Battle of Little Bighorn and practised their literacy skills by creating interviews with 'General Custer' and 'Chief Sitting Bull'.
- The academy has strong links with other academies in the trust and with local schools. Staff from the different schools have opportunities to share expertise and learn from each other. Pupils from local schools also work together and compete against each other in sports and competitions. The academy trust has provided good support in helping leaders develop systems which enable them to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The academy has undertaken a review of its curriculum and assessment arrangements, in the light of the changes to the national curriculum.
- The new primary sports funding has enabled the academy to employ specialist coaches to work alongside class teachers. This means that, while pupils benefit from specialist coaching, their class teachers learn new techniques for teaching the subject. These coaches also organise lunch time and after school clubs and have introduced a wider range of sporting activities. As a result, more pupils are participating in physical activities than in previous years and they are developing stronger skills. For example, the school came third in the local basketball league.
- Good links with local industries help the academy prepare pupils for life in a wider world of work. Pupils also learn about other ways of life in lessons. They listen carefully to the views of others and show respect for different religions and cultures. This ensures they are well-prepared for life in modern Britain. A strong sense of respect and self-worth pervades all lessons so that pupils feel comfortable about asking to join a support group if they are struggling with a concept. They appreciate that everyone needs help at different times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Under the leadership of the experienced Chair of Governors, the governing body has refined how it works and has become much more proficient at holding senior leaders accountable for improving the academy. Experienced governors support newer members well so that they, too, develop the skills they need to ask challenging questions. Governors visit the academy regularly to see for themselves how it is doing. They ensure that the academy strongly promotes pupils' sense of values, such as respect for and tolerance for the beliefs and culture of others.

- Finances are managed well. Governors check that additional funding is helping disadvantaged pupils do at least as well as their classmates. They know that the primary sports funding is providing more opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities and is improving pupils' skills. Governors know how good teaching is, and oversee the arrangements for the appraisal of teachers carefully to ensure it is contributing effectively to improvements in teaching. They make sure that teachers' pay rises are linked to the progress that pupils make and that teachers benefit from high-quality training.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties well. They make sure that national requirements for safeguarding and child protection are met in full.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are helpful to adults and each other. During the inspection pupils were overheard using polite and respectful language between themselves as a matter of course. At playtimes pupils of different ages play well together. Some pupils act as sports leaders while others keep an eye out for younger pupils through the buddying system.
- Pupils and most parents agree that behaviour in the academy is good. During the inspection, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the system of rewards and consequences. They feel it is fair and works well.
- In lessons, pupils show a mature understanding of how they are progressing. They readily discuss how well they understand the new concepts they have learned. This enables them to make decisions about whether they need additional help or are ready to move on to more advanced work, and shows their very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils take roles of responsibility very seriously and behave sensibly when carrying out their tasks. For example, the 'reporters' wear their designated ties with pride while recording activities which they then add to the website. This gives other pupils and parents an insight into what is happening in different parts of the academy, from the pupils' perspective.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that clear procedures are in place to ensure pupils' safety and to meet child protection requirements, and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that there is always someone to go to if they have a problem. They particularly value the 'concern box' because they say that they know any worries they have will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take, such as physical cyber or name-calling. They told inspectors that it rarely happens, but any problems are quickly dealt with. They say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as on the road and when using the internet. They spoke animatedly about the fire alarm which sounded the previous day and how well they followed the normal routine to evacuate the building, believing it could have been a real fire.
- Pupils are encouraged to be aware of others around them to make sure they all stay safe. For example, in a sports lesson, pupils were reminded to watch where a stray ball went before running after to avoid colliding with others.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching for all pupils, including for the more able, is good, both in English, including reading, and in mathematics. Teachers are particularly skilled at checking pupils' understanding so that they know when to move them on to more advanced work. For example, teachers and other adults ask searching questions

to check and deepen understanding. They also encourage pupils to be honest about how confident they feel about their work, so that the pupils develop effective learning strategies that enable them to cope with the challenges they have been set.

- When introducing new ideas, teachers make sure pupils fully understand what they have to do. For example in a Year 3 class, the teacher invited the pupils to gather round the 'modelling table' so that he could show them how to get started on designing a leaflet. Pupils watched the brief but clear demonstration, asked some sensible questions and then quickly moved on to produce some high quality work.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are undertaken systematically and accurately, and this enables the academy to respond promptly to any pupils in difficulty and to identify those capable of achieving more. In this way, assessment supports pupils' achievement very well.
- Other adults in the classroom are well-trained and well-briefed. This enables them to follow the good role models that teachers provide and play an active part in developing pupils' learning. Additional adults work alongside pupils in or outside the classroom to correct any misconceptions and to help pupils who find the work difficult.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, disadvantaged and more-able pupils all benefit at different times from additional adult support. Their specific needs are accurately identified by teachers and they are given opportunities to work in small groups or on their own with an adult when needed. As a result, all groups achieve well. The support given to pupils from ethnic minorities and those at an early stage of learning English is good. Adults give pupils opportunities to practise newly acquired vocabulary, both in small group and with the rest of the class.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils, although very effective in some classes, lacks consistency across the school. Some teachers regularly give pupils clear guidance as to how they can improve, but this guidance is not always consistently clear or timely enough in all classes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Progress has improved in recent years. This means that now all groups of pupils make good progress and standards have risen. In 2013, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were below average but school data show that in 2014 they had risen to a point where they were average. Similarly, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen from average in 2013 to above average in 2014.
- In 2013, Key Stage 2 pupils had not made enough progress since they left Key Stage 1. This is no longer the case. School data and work in books show that pupils in all year groups are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. All groups of pupils, including those from Indian backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve equally well.
- The results of the most recent national screening check at the end of Year 1 on pupils' knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters represent in words) were above average. During the inspection, these younger pupils were able to use their phonics skills to read unfamiliar words such as 'adventure' and 'librarian'. All pupils spoken to during the inspection said they enjoyed reading and were keen to talk about their books.
- In 2013, disadvantaged pupils in receipt of the pupil premium in Year 6 made at least as much progress as their peers in school and achieved at least as well in reading and mathematics. However, they were one and a half terms behind in writing. Academy data shows that disadvantaged pupils currently in the academy make good progress and the gap between their attainment and that of their peers narrows as they get older. In 2014, attainment overall had improved and disadvantaged pupils attained as well as their classmates in reading and writing and mathematics, and performed better than similar pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well-supported. They make good

progress in all subjects throughout the academy. Their specific needs are quickly identified and support provided to help them make good progress from their different starting points.

- More-able pupils make good progress and achieve well. In 2014, more Year 6 pupils attained the highest levels than in previous years. The proportion of more-able pupils making better than expected progress was very close to national figures of 2013, the last year for which national data has been released.

The early years provision is good

- Children get a good start in the Reception class and soon settle in. Although this varies from year to year, children start with many skills equal to, or just below, those typical for their age. They make good progress and, in 2014, 53% achieved a good level of development.
- Activities are carefully planned to develop children's skills and tailored to meet their specific needs. For example, as increasing numbers of children start school with limited understanding of English, teachers have made sure that the activities help develop these language skills. Instructions are supported by signs and pictures to help children understand the class routines and all children readily greet each other in the different languages.
- Teaching is good and children are encouraged to be independent and inquisitive. During the inspection, they dressed in wet weather clothes to enjoy playing in the rain. One child was thrilled by the noise of water falling from the roof onto his umbrella and this generated excitement and good opportunities for language development.
- Through good modelling by adults, children soon learn the academy values of sharing and respect for each other. They are encouraged to listen to each other's ideas and appreciate that people can have different views. Even though they had only been in school for a few weeks, inspectors saw children sharing, taking turns and concentrating well on their activities.
- The early years provision is led well. Children's progress is rigorously checked and any who need specific support are soon identified and activities arranged to help them achieve well.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138999
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	447867

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Richard
Headteacher	Peter Wood
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0116 2897151
Fax number	N/A
Email address	office@millfield.leics.sch.uk

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