

Milton Mount Primary School

Grattons Drive, Pound Hill, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 3AG

Inspection dates

18–19 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- As the school has grown, leadership capacity has not been strengthened quickly enough. As a result, leaders have not checked that all groups of pupils throughout the school are making the progress they should.
- Frequent changes in staffing have hindered the ability of school leaders to improve the quality of teaching quickly enough.
- Teaching is not yet good. Some teachers do not challenge pupils enough to help them make good progress.
- Some teachers do not have the subject knowledge needed to teach all areas of the curriculum sufficiently well.
- Adults do not consistently check how well pupils are learning in lessons.
- New middle leaders do not yet have a comprehensive understanding of their role in raising standards over time when compared with all schools nationally.
- In recent years, the progress made by pupils in key stage 2 has not been rapid enough. This includes disadvantaged pupils who only made slightly better progress than their peers.
- Some children make insufficient progress in the early years because leaders do not track all areas of learning well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving. For example, attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2015 was above national averages.
- The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is good.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a curriculum that is broad and interesting and makes effective use of the environment and teachers' specialisms.
- Safeguarding is effective. The school takes all necessary steps to keep pupils safe from harm.
- Teachers value the induction and continuous professional development they receive to help them improve.
- Governance has strengthened and now has a clear focus on improving pupils' progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that they are at least good by ensuring that:
 - all leaders understand the progress pupils make compared with all other pupils nationally
 - leaders make swift interventions when pupils are identified as underachieving compared with their starting points, including in the early years
 - the new senior leadership team has a relentless focus on improving pupils' progress over time and that governors monitor the impact of their actions.

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and pupils make more rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons
 - ensuring that all teachers have precise subject knowledge that allows them to deepen pupils' learning, especially in mathematics
 - refining the school's procedures for feedback to pupils so that it is consistent, efficient and has an impact on improving the learning that takes place
 - monitoring the learning of those pupils who are not working directly with a teacher.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders have spent too much of their time dealing with a growing school and the continuous challenge of recruitment. As the school has grown, leadership capacity has not been strengthened quickly enough. As a result, existing leaders have had to focus on what they see as the priorities at the time. This has hindered their ability to check that pupils throughout the school are making the progress they should.
 - For example, in 2015 leaders focused on ensuring that the vast majority of Year 6 pupils achieved the expected Level 4, so that the school was above the government's floor standard and pupils were well prepared for the next stage of their education. This was at the expense of ensuring that all groups of pupils throughout the school, including the most able, were achieving as well as they should.
 - Teachers appreciate the guidance they receive from school leaders to help them improve their work. However, these leaders have had to repeat training with new teachers as they have joined the school, so that they can meet the school's expectations. These staff changes have slowed the pace of improvement since the previous inspection.
 - Recognising that capacity needs to be built to share leadership throughout the school, the headteacher has recently employed a second deputy headteacher and strengthened the role of year-group team leaders. These team leaders are passionate and capable teachers who are able to show the impact they have had in the short term in terms of helping their colleagues, especially newly qualified teachers, improve aspects of their teaching. However, these improvements have not yet been sustained enough to have a real impact on improving pupils' outcomes over time.
 - Leaders of other key areas of the school, such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs, are too new to the school to be having an impact on raising standards but are already working well with colleagues in the school, parents and other agencies.
 - Some subject leaders are very knowledgeable about their subject, but do not yet have the ability to challenge their other colleagues to improve their teaching or pupils' outcomes.
 - Many of these new school leaders understand how attainment is rising within the school and compares well with that in other local schools. However, they do not understand that the progress pupils make from their starting points is weak when compared with all other schools nationally. They are receiving support from senior leaders and the local authority to develop this wider understanding.
 - School leaders have planned a curriculum which provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils. The effective use of specialist teachers in Forest School, music, physical education (PE) and French contributes well to an interesting curriculum. Good links are made to allow pupils to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills in different topics. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that pupils enjoy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported and they have a growing understanding of the values needed to live in modern Britain.
 - The primary PE and sports funding is spent effectively to raise participation in extra-curricular and competitive sport and to improve the skills of class teachers when teaching PE.
 - The vast majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey believe that the school is well led and managed.
 - Current extensive support from the local authority is having a clear impact on improving teaching and leadership. However, this has only been in place for the last six months. The local authority could have provided more focused support earlier. The local authority's plans to change the support again in the future could slow the pace of improvement in the school.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors have a wide range of skills and experience that allow them to ask school leaders challenging questions about the school's performance. They are very aware that the progress pupils have been making has not been good enough and have recently strengthened the leadership team to aid future improvements.
 - Governors visit the school regularly to check for themselves on the progress being made in specific areas of the school's work. For example, recent governor questioning has led to the school refining its system for assessing how well pupils are progressing. However, there are some instances where governors need to verify externally that the improvements school leaders describe to them are rigorously embedded.

- Governors ensure that pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is used appropriately to close the gaps in attainment with other pupils. However, they recognise that although the gaps in attainment are closing, these pupils are still not making sufficient progress.
- Governors check that the performance management systems for teaching staff are rigorous and that pay awards are linked to good performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a culture of care, consideration and respect throughout the school. The headteacher takes the lead with safeguarding and provides relentless support for the most vulnerable pupils. There is a regular training programme that ensures all staff and governors understand their responsibilities. The headteacher escalates cases to other professionals swiftly when pupils are at risk of harm, including from radicalisation. The checks on staff and volunteers who work in the school are rigorous and carried out in a timely manner.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good and expectations about what pupils are capable of achieving are often too low. Consequently, pupils only just make the progress that is expected of them over time.
- In this school, teachers often work in a focused way with a small group of pupils whilst the rest of the class complete other tasks independently.
- Some teachers work well with pupils in focused groups and close gaps in skills and knowledge in a targeted way. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher used their accurate subject knowledge to work with different groups of pupils for short periods of time to reinforce the correct use of different punctuation.
- However, there is variation in how well the rest of the class are monitored and as a result, some groups do not make enough progress in lessons. The majority of teachers are not consistently able to teach a focused group and check that the remainder of the class are making good progress.
- There are limitations in some teachers' subject knowledge, especially in mathematics. They are able to teach a method correctly and check that pupils' answers are correct but cannot always check deeper understanding of concepts. As a result, in some classes, there are limited opportunities for pupils to think for themselves by problem solving and reasoning mathematically.
- Whilst teachers know the next steps in the curriculum, they do not always use this flexibly to suit their pupils by moving them through the work more quickly or slowly as required. This slows the rate of progress.
- The school is developing a system of assessment that is well matched to the curriculum. Teachers and governors have contributed to refinements to the system as it becomes embedded.
- School leaders are aware that there is too much variation in the way that teachers provide pupils with feedback. Some teachers write too much in response to pupils' learning and could be much more efficient and precise in the feedback they give. Some teachers have successfully adopted a system where pupils help to edit their own work, which school leaders would now like to share across the school as an example of best practice.
- In all classes, teachers promote positive working relationships between adults and pupils. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere and pupils complete the tasks they have been set.
- Where teaching is most successful, teachers' questioning prompts pupils to think and the most able are challenged. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the most able pupils were required to solve problems using an Ordnance Survey map by converting distances from kilometres to miles and vice versa.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by dedicated learning support assistants.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) is accurate and effective; this has led to improved outcomes in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils have completed extended pieces of writing about their history topic on the Great Fire of London.
- Newly qualified teachers appreciate the support they receive from school leaders to help them improve their teaching. The school leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching throughout the school.
- Specialist teachers for subjects such as music and French are effective at promoting pupils' enthusiasm in these subjects and this leads to good progress. A small group of pupils had the confidence to chat politely

to an inspector in French, demonstrating the conversational vocabulary they had learned.

- The vast majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey believe that their children are well taught. However, there is a more mixed view on the appropriateness of homework. Some parents and older pupils would like more challenging homework to help them prepare for secondary school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In this school, pupils have the right to their own views and this is respected by others.
- Pupils learn about being healthy, in terms of what they choose to eat and getting more exercise. Participation in sport has increased and pupils enjoy the element of competition in activities.
- Pupils can explain what it is like to be a 'good' person. They collaborate together well, and politely challenge each other when they have a different opinion.
- Pupils are keen to take on roles and responsibilities that help the school, the environment or each other. For example, 'young interpreters' help those pupils for whom English is an additional language to learn new words and phrases in a supportive way.
- Interesting lessons and visitors help pupils learn to be safe in a variety of situations, including when they are working or playing online. Learning in the Forest School encourages pupils to take appropriate risks and try new things.
- Bullying is not a problem at Milton Mount; the very few incidents are well dealt with by school leaders and anti-bullying ambassadors.
- The lack of challenge in some lessons restricts opportunities for pupils to learn from failure and build the skills of resilience and perseverance.
- The overwhelming majority of staff, pupils and parents who completed online questionnaires during the inspection agreed that pupils are safe at this school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils respond swiftly to instructions from adults. During more unstructured times, pupils are calm, orderly and well behaved.
- Pupils move around the school independently and sensibly. They use the break-out areas and outside equipment safely.
- Attendance is above the national average, showing that pupils have good attitudes towards school and enjoy their learning. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and eager to learn. The school takes swift action when attendance falls below the expected level.
- For the very few pupils who find it more difficult to behave appropriately, there have been clear improvements in behaviour over time, due to structured support from the school.
- Pupils are wholly supportive and understand the causes and consequences of poor behaviour. Pupils have been involved in agreeing sanctions for the few times inappropriate behaviour occurs.
- Staff, pupils and parents are all confident that pupils behave well and the infrequent incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with appropriately by teachers and school leaders.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because it does not have a strong, positive impact on the progress pupils make. For example, there is a wide variation in the quality of presentation of written work throughout the school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- In recent years, the progress that pupils have made during key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has not been good enough.
- School leaders have made concerted efforts to raise the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level at the end of Year 6, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Whilst this has been successful, it has masked underachievement by other pupils.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make at least similar progress to their English-speaking peers.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils through key stage 2 has been better than that of their non-disadvantaged peers in the school, helping to close gaps in attainment. However, this progress is still weaker than the progress made by all other pupils nationally.
- In many mathematics lessons, pupils are asked to focus on following a procedure to get a correct answer, rather than developing deeper conceptual understanding. Most pupils have good calculation skills but are not having the opportunity to apply them. Limitations in the subject knowledge of some teachers are preventing them from challenging the most able pupils. In Year 6, the most able pupils are challenged in mathematics lessons and are encouraged to problem solve and reason in real-life contexts.
- More recently, rates of progress have started to improve. School assessment information from the last year shows that all groups of pupils in key stage 2, including the most able, made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in the school are now generally making the progress that is expected of them over time, but this is not enough to eradicate previous underachievement.
- Most pupils with special educational needs are making expected progress considering their starting points and specific needs.
- Observations in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' books show that generally, pupils are making the progress that should be expected. However, some pupils are not given work that is challenging enough. Pupils are compliant and complete the tasks but are not taught how to challenge themselves. During the inspection, inspectors all spoke to pupils who said that they would like more challenging work.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well known by teachers and they often receive good bespoke support. As a result, they are generally making expected progress, whilst some disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are making particularly good progress.
- The vast majority of pupils achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 2 because of focused and accurate teaching.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Provision for children in the early years requires improvement because leadership is not yet good and children do not consistently make good progress from their starting points. As a result, a slightly lower proportion of children than found nationally are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Children with the lowest starting points make progress to close the gap. However, those that enter at typical levels are making slower progress. The most able are not making the progress they should towards exceeding early learning goals.
- Not all additional adults who work in the setting have high enough expectations of children or the skills to move their learning on quickly. Sometimes, they interrupt children's thinking by asking too many questions and slowing their learning down.
- Assessment systems in the early years focus on reading, writing and mathematics too much. Leaders do not notice when children are underperforming in other areas of the curriculum. This has prevented some children from achieving a good level of development.
- Outcomes in writing were low in 2015. There were wide gaps in performance between girls and boys. However, these are now closing as boys are choosing to write more frequently because interesting experiences have been provided to stimulate their interest. Teachers encourage children to use prompts around the room to support their writing.
- There is a vibrant, well-resourced environment for learning, both inside and outside. Children learn cooperatively in different contexts, for example when retelling the story of the three little pigs using large building blocks.

- Teaching is often interesting and engaging. For example, the teacher shared an information book and asked questions about baby farm animals in preparation for a forthcoming visit to a farm. The children were very engaged and asked their own questions and made predictions about what they would see. Phonics teaching is particularly effective.
- In a moment of awe and wonder, children were enthralled watching and waiting for their chicks to hatch from the eggs in the incubator.
- Children with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged are well supported. Children who are entitled to the pupil premium make good progress from their entry to school due to targeted support.
- Parents are involved in the collation of 'learning journeys', which record evidence of children's learning across the curriculum.
- The welfare requirements are met and safeguarding and safety procedures are effective. Children keep themselves safe and manage appropriate risks well.

School details

Unique reference number	125916
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10012246

This inspection 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	565
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley King
Headteacher	Anne Holmes
Telephone number	01293 537158
Website	www.miltonmount.co.uk
Email address	office@miltonmount.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average primary school and is continuing to grow. There are currently three forms of entry in all year groups, apart from Years 5 and 6 where there are two. However, Year 6 is currently organised into three smaller classes.
- Early years provision is provided full time in three Reception classes.
- Less than one tenth of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils), which is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is lower than that found nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. However, more than a quarter are from other ethnic groups, the largest of these being Indian and Pakistani.
- English is an additional language for approximately one fifth of the pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In recent years, there has been significant turbulence in staffing; 16 of the current teachers were not employed by the school at the time of the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class and attended two assemblies. Many of the observations were carried out with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, other school leaders, a group of newly qualified teachers, six governors (including the chair of the governing body) and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at break- and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school. An inspector also met with a group of key stage 2 pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life. They also looked at 90 responses from the online pupil questionnaire.
- An inspector heard some pupils in key stage 1 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school website and a range of school documents including: assessment information; minutes from governors' meetings; reports from governors' monitoring visits; the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching; and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the 91 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, including many free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents before school at the beginning of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 42 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Lakey	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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