

# Milton Road Primary School

Ascham Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 2BD

## Inspection dates

6–7 December 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require 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

- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced a number of senior leadership changes. As a result, improvements have not been sustained and pupils still make inconsistent progress across year groups and subjects.
- The quality of the curriculum provision is variable and at times too narrow. Middle leaders have not had enough opportunity and training to monitor and improve the quality of provision and outcomes in their subjects.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics varies across year groups. Too often the most able pupils are provided with activities that restrict the progress they can make.
- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information well enough to plan learning that deepens and extends pupils' curiosity and skills, particularly in key stage 1.
- The teaching of early reading is slow and at times inaccurate. The most able children in the early years are not making progress as quickly as they should do.
- The early years environment requires improvement. Children are not provided with enough activities to develop their social and collaborative learning skills sufficiently.
- Teachers do not use the skills of additional adults well enough. Too often, these adults have little impact on the progress pupils make.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is now improving at pace. The new headteacher has swiftly implemented a systematic and rigorous approach to school improvement.
- Pupils achieve well by the end of key stage 2. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are well trained. Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree.
- The governing body are effective. They are dedicated and skilled in providing strategic direction for the school. They have ensured that there is leadership capacity to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They attend school regularly and enjoy the many school clubs that are on offer before, and at the end of, the school day.
- There is a strong sense of community. Most parents, pupils and staff were highly positive about the recent 'Kindness Week'.

## Full report

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

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - equipping middle leaders with the strategies to effectively monitor and improve the quality of the provision and outcomes in their subject area
  - ensuring that there is a systematic and rigorous approach to curriculum planning so that pupils develop rich and sustained knowledge, understanding and skills across a broader range of subjects
  - holding adults more rigorously to account for the consistent quality of education across each year group and subject.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - making sure teachers use assessment information accurately to plan learning that meets the needs of all pupils in their class
  - ensuring adults have consistently high expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning by providing experiences that develop their curiosity for a range of subjects
  - using additional adults effectively to improve the progress that pupils make
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical understanding in different and stimulating ways.
- Improve the provision in the early years by:
  - ensuring that the proportion of children who make good progress from their high starting points rises so the most able children are very well prepared for Year 1
  - improving the teaching of early reading so that children develop their skills quickly and use their knowledge and understanding of the sounds that letters make accurately
  - providing a stimulating learning environment both indoors and outdoors for children to develop their social and collaborative skills.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence. During the last two academic years there have been a number of senior leadership changes. This has resulted in slower progress and some of the positive changes that have been made have not been sufficiently sustained.
- From September 2016, a new, highly experienced headteacher took up post. He has seized the opportunity to establish his high expectations, vision and ethos. He has implemented a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and set rigorous and realistic targets for pupil achievement in all year groups. Many parents commented on the positive changes at the school. One parent wrote, 'he has restored a sense of leadership and progress'.
- Senior leaders and governors are working closely with the local authority to hasten the pace of change at the school so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Since the previous inspection, the progress that pupils make in Year 6 has improved. Inspection evidence supports the fact that the older pupils respond exceptionally well to the challenge and high expectations they now receive. However, these high expectations are not consistent and systematic in enough year groups.
- Middle leaders have not received sufficient training and opportunity to lead and monitor their subject areas well. Consequently, the progress that pupils make varies too much. The quality of provision in subjects such as history and geography, together with science for the younger pupils, is not good enough. Currently, middle leaders are now receiving training and have credible action plans in place but it is too soon to assess the impact of their work.
- Leaders have not planned the curriculum as well as possible to develop pupils' fascination for learning. Pupils do not regularly receive stimulating and interesting work that meets their needs in a number of subject areas. Too often, adults provide pupils with the same worksheets, irrespective of pupils' ability. Consequently, for the most able pupils the curriculum is too narrow and they often become uninterested.
- Pupils visit local museums or hear from visiting speakers to enhance their experience. However, it is difficult to determine the learning impact of these events, as the supplementary activities are not always well presented and are not sufficiently stretching or engaging.
- Leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving at pace. Pupils who require additional support are identified quickly and work with external agencies is proving successful. Parents spoken to agree that their children's individual needs are well cared for. This is not yet consistent because the learning planned by some teachers does not match these pupils' needs precisely enough.
- The school is providing well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding of British values. During the inspection, in the Reception classes they were learning about Hanukah from a visiting speaker. The children showed

exceptional listening skills during the talk. In one assembly, with the theme of forgiveness, pupils engaged respectfully and maturely during the adult's engaging and skilful story-telling. One pupil stated as he left the hall, 'Assemblies make you think about important morals or issues.'

- Parents are supportive of the school, but recognise that at times their children are not challenged enough. Many parents commented positively about the start of the new headteacher and the impact that they can already see for their children's education. During the inspection, a large number of parents came to watch their children perform in a music concert. Milton Road Primary has a strong supportive community, where the vast majority of parents would recommend the school to others.
- Pupil premium funding is used increasingly well to impact upon the progress that disadvantaged pupils make. Leaders have securely identified the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. However, leaders have not fully evaluated the impact of their spending against the progress that these pupils make.
- The local authority have provided both support and challenge through their regular visits to the school since the previous inspection. Some of the training provided for teachers has had a positive impact; for example, the progress that pupils in Year 6 made in 2016 was much improved compared with previous years. However, at other points staff have not made sustained use of the training they have received.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is very effective. Since the previous inspection the governing body, ably led by the chair of governors, has steered the school through challenging times. They have successfully recruited a permanent headteacher to re-energise the school and ensure that the pupils at Milton Road Primary School receive the best possible education across the curriculum.
- Governors have a robust understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are accurate in their evaluation and provide clear strategic direction. Together with the newly formed leadership team, they demonstrate there is capacity for rapid improvement at the school.
- Governors have rigorous processes in place for ensuring that finances are used well. They have not shied away from taking difficult decisions with regard to finances so that the school funds can provide value for money. In performance management procedures, governors ensure that correct procedures and processes are in place and adhered to.
- Minutes of meetings demonstrate that governors ask challenging questions of school leaders to hold them to account for the achievement of pupils. Governors check the information they receive by regularly visiting the school. They discuss with pupils the quality of learning and what can be improved further.
- Governors recognise that some parents are concerned about the quality of communication they receive from the school. As part of addressing these concerns governors are updating the website.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory safeguarding requirements are currently in place. Staff are well trained and receive updates regularly from senior leaders. Governors ensure that all the necessary checks are completed when new members of staff are recruited.

Safeguarding records are compliant and in good order.

- All staff are well trained in identifying concerns and know how to report these concerns appropriately. The designated staff work well with external organisations to ensure that the appropriate action is taken. School child protection records are well maintained and action is followed up where necessary.
- Governors are well trained in their safeguarding duties and continue to update their own knowledge and understanding so that they can hold school leaders to account for the safeguarding of pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and are safe at school. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, agree that the school keeps their children safe. Well-placed posters and notices around the school ensure that everyone is informed of who to speak to if they have concerns.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across year groups and subjects. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that not enough pupils receive learning activities that are interesting and well matched to their skills and abilities. Where teachers have well-established routines and consistent expectations across the curriculum, pupils learn and cooperate well together. In these classes, pupils are making strong progress over time.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is inconsistent both across year groups and within classes. This is because pupils often have to listen to explanations that are too easy or too hard. Too often, pupils are provided with worksheets that limit the most able pupils. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities and resources for the most able pupils to use and apply their skills so that they practise and deepen their mathematical reasoning well enough to excel. This is particularly true in key stage 1.
- When the teacher's subject knowledge is strong and expectations for learning clear, pupils settle quickly to their learning activities and produce work of a high standard. They demonstrate secure levels of skills and understanding. For example, in Year 6, pupils are making good progress in developing their writing skills. In their books there is evidence that pupils are able to write confidently in a range of genres.
- In pupils' books for subjects such as science, geography and history, the most able and lower-attaining pupils are often provided with the same worksheets. These provide little opportunity for pupils to practise their skills or develop their fascination for learning. For example, in many science books, pupils were completing words on sheets with little evidence of developing their scientific knowledge and skills through completing scientific experiments.
- Where additional adults work with individual pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities they skilfully support these pupils so they can make progress in their learning. However, in too many classes, additional adults are not always deployed as well as they could be. This results in them having a less than effective impact on pupils' learning.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English and mathematics. In Year 6, there is a range of genres evident in pupils' topic books. In

addition, pupils in Year 5 were planning a report following their ice skating visit. However the quality of presentation in pupils' topic books is lower than in their English books.

- In lower key stage 2, there is more evidence of consistency in the quality of work pupils produce across the curriculum. This is because more teachers have high expectations and insist on the very best presentation and effort. Pupils easily rise to the challenge and work hard in these lessons.
- In many of the lessons seen by inspectors, adults were using questioning skills effectively. Pupils are learning to respond to these questions in a more collaborative way that stimulates discussion and deepens their understanding. For example, in one lesson seen where pupils were planning a tale from another culture, the teacher asked a pupil to 'add more detail' to their verbal answer. The pupil was able to elaborate on the features of writing from the work in her book and so all made good progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Not enough adults provide systematic, stimulating and engaging activities for the most able pupils to develop a pride in their learning. Consequently, in some dull lessons, pupils' attitudes to their learning are not always as positive as they could be and low-level disruption goes unchecked. Across year groups, teachers do not promote consistent expectations of learning behaviour.
- The standard of pupils' presentation of their work varies across the school and adults do not show younger pupils how to achieve the best quality well enough. Where this does happen well, for example in a Year 4 class, pupils respond well to the consistently high expectations and produce work in most subjects to the best of their capabilities.
- Many parents commented positively about the recent 'Kindness Week' at the school. They were appreciative of the way in which staff and pupils promoted acts of kindness. Displays around the school demonstrated a wealth of work that pupils produced from this whole-school topic. One pupil commented, 'Kindness Week is now making everyone much kinder to one another.'
- Pupils have a secure understanding of different forms of bullying and were insistent that it is very rare at Milton Road. Older pupils spoke confidently about approaches to prevent cyber bullying and how to keep safe when using the internet.
- Pupils could identify a person that they would be happy to speak with should they have a concern. All pupils spoken to considered that adults would listen to them and deal swiftly with any issue that arose.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. They play well together during less structured times. At playtime and lunchtimes, pupils often devise their own games to play. Pupils are very proud of their football achievements and appreciate the coaching that they receive before school.

- Pupils attend school well. Absences are routinely followed up by staff; families with children who are persistently absent are offered the support they need to rectify the situation, which results in improved attendance.
- All staff who responded to the online questionnaire agreed that pupils are well behaved at school and that staff manage behaviour consistently and well. Evidence from the school's behaviour and racist incident records support this view.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agreed that pupils are well behaved.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Require improvement

- From their often high starting points, pupils who left key stage 2 in 2016 generally made progress that was at least broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally, in mathematics and writing. They made stronger progress in reading.
- Pupils' attainment overall was above that found nationally at both the expected standard and the higher standard for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. From the school's information and evidence seen in books this improvement in pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2 looks set to continue.
- The progress that pupils made in key stage 1 represents expected progress from their high starting points. In 2016, fewer pupils who reached the expected level in writing when they were in Reception achieved the same standard by the end of Year 2. In mathematics, pupils made expected progress from the end of Reception.
- At the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was greater than the national average. However, current books demonstrate that this high standard has not been sustained into lower key stage 2, and pupils are not as secure as they should be in applying their skills, particularly in mathematics. The proportion who reached the higher standard in mathematics was below the national average.
- By the end of key stage 2, the small numbers of pupils who are disadvantaged make progress that is in line with others nationally from the same starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. From in-school information and evidence in books, disadvantaged pupils make less progress than their peers from their own similarly strong starting points. There has not been a consistent enough focus on raising the achievement of this small group in classes.
- In 2016, by the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that made strong progress was significantly lower than others nationally with the same lower starting points. This is particularly true in writing. For those who are currently on roll, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now tracked carefully so that their individual needs are met.
- In 2016, pupils' achievement in the phonic screening check fell below the national average and represented poor progress for pupils since leaving Reception, especially for disadvantaged pupils. From listening to some younger pupils read, they have not received precise enough teaching when developing their early reading skills to use and blend sounds accurately enough. In some of the teaching seen, adults were not accurate enough with the letter sounds they produced.

- Pupils' achievement in other subjects varies. This is because adults do not expect the same high standards in subjects such as history, geography and science. The most able pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply their subject skills in a range of different ways so that they can excel. When they do have the opportunity, they relish the challenge. This was evident from the older pupils in this group who have science lessons in the local secondary school.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Children start at Milton Road with skills and abilities that are at least in line with those typical for their age. Approximately one third of children start with abilities that are even higher. Since the previous inspection, the achievement of pupils in Reception has been in line with the national picture. In 2016, the good level of development expected by the end of Reception was 75%. Considering their starting points, this does not represent good progress in the children's learning. Not enough children reach the higher standards by the end of Reception.
- Adults do not plan the learning environment well enough so children develop their social and collaborative skills. The children start from many different nurseries and other provisions. Although the transition arrangements are secure and well considered so children settle well, the adults have not continued children's social and pastoral development through rich and well-chosen activities as well as they could.
- Children's interests are not as carefully considered when adults plan the learning activities. Adults choose the resources carefully and children practise their skills, following instructions exceptionally well. However, a few children quickly become uninterested during child-initiated play, because they either complete activities quickly or struggle to understand what is required of them. Not all adults notice and intervene in a timely way to develop these children's skills of perseverance and determination. As a result, some children continually flit from one activity to another.
- The teaching of reading and phonics is slow. Parents commented using Ofsted's free text service that their children are not provided with reading books soon enough. Inspectors found that books are not changed as regularly as they could be to ensure that the most able children develop their reading skills more quickly. Consequently, the most able children are not gaining reading skills and an enjoyment of books rapidly enough.
- Children use the sounds they have learned well to write words such as 'pig' and 'cat'. They easily demonstrate their higher starting points with many of them writing words and phrases clearly. For example, one child was helping another child to spell 'angel'; she was able to confidently explain the difference between a 'j' and a 'g' to support her friend. They were both delighted with the result.
- The classes are calm and safe places in which to learn. Adults use questions well to encourage language and communication skills. Children are developing their independence in learning, especially with writing.
- Children behave very well in the early years. Most enjoy their learning and are keen to participate in activities. They are particularly keen to show their skills and are proud of their achievements.



## School details

Unique reference number	133930
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10021793

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sylvie Baird
Headteacher	Dr Michael Catchpool
Telephone number	01223 712 333
Website	<a href="http://www.miltonroadschool.org.uk">www.miltonroadschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@miltonroad.cambs.sch.uk">office@miltonroad.cambs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–17 December 2014

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the impact of its spending of pupil premium and sport premium for 2015/16.
- This is a much larger than average primary school
- Disadvantaged pupils account for 5% of the school population. This is considerably below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from a minority ethnic group has been rising for the last three years.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is at 7%, which is approximately half of that found nationally. The number of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is higher than the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2015, which were the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- There have been changes to the headship of the school since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in September 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included observing learning in all classes, some of which were jointly seen with senior leaders.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils and scrutinised books from a wide range of subjects, to take account of the work that has been done and the progress that pupils make.
- The teaching of phonics was observed. Inspectors listened to a number of pupils from Year 1 reading, and heard some reading in classes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and most of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a meeting with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation around child protection and scrutinised the recruitment checks made by school leaders when employing staff.
- The inspectors spoke informally with some parents to gather their views. Parental views were also considered from 131 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, together with comments provided on the free text service.
- The inspectors spoke to staff informally and took account of their views through their responses to an online Ofsted questionnaire.

## Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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