

Milverton House School

Park Street, Attleborough, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 4NS

Inspection dates

4–6 July 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor and headteacher have failed to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher takes responsibility for almost all aspects of school improvement. This limits the leadership team's capacity for developing the school's provision.
- The proprietor has not made sure that school leaders are promoting good outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders rarely check on the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, they do not address weaker aspects of teaching.
- Teachers do not consistently plan learning tasks that match pupils' abilities and enable them to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- The school's performance has declined since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is not consistently good and this is reflected in the variability of pupils' progress across the school.
- Outcomes are not yet good because not all pupils achieve their full potential and make good progress.
- Leaders do not have an effective system to monitor and evaluate pupils' achievement.
- The most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should because work is often not challenging enough.
- The proprietor and headteacher have not secured effective safeguarding arrangements and taken all necessary measures to keep pupils safe.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership of the early years is strong. Children in pre-prep and Reception get off to a good start because of effective teaching.
- Teachers are committed and keen to improve their practice.
- Pupils behave well and treat each other with respect. There are good relationships between staff and pupils.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the proprietor and leaders have a good understanding of, and take all actions necessary to meet, the independent school standards
 - all safeguarding and health and safety issues identified in the unmet independent school standards are immediately rectified
 - all staff and volunteers receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training which equips them well for protecting pupils who may be at risk of harm
 - all staff use the correct Department for Education absence and attendance codes when completing attendance registers
 - leadership responsibilities are shared among the leadership team, with leaders enabled to carry out these functions effectively
 - the proprietor has an accurate overview of the effectiveness of the school, and holds leaders rigorously to account for the school's performance
 - there are effective checks made on the quality of teaching and learning, including providing constructive feedback to teachers to help them develop their practice
 - there is an appropriate whole-school assessment system in place which carefully tracks and monitors the achievement of individuals and groups
 - the curriculum includes an effective scheme of work for personal, social, health and economic education which supports pupils' development and progress, including a coordinated approach to teaching British values
 - leaders' action plans are based on accurate self-evaluation and include measurable success criteria, timescales and arrangements for regular monitoring and evaluation.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information about what pupils already understand and can do to inform their planning
 - teachers plan work which is well matched to the needs of all pupils and which enables them to explore topics in greater depth and to get a deeper understanding
 - teachers keep a closer check on pupils' learning, particularly in writing, to see when they need to move them onto harder work or provide more support when pupils find work difficult
 - teachers set appropriately challenging work, particularly for the most able pupils
 - teachers regularly take part in relevant training and development opportunities to improve their practice
 - leaders provide opportunities for teachers to share good practice across the school.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by

appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2), is drawn up and implemented effectively;

- which includes personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).

■ The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:

- enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
- involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d) and 3(g)).

■ The proprietor must meet the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school by:

- actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act and encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England (paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii)).

■ The proprietor must ensure that arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).

■ The proprietor must ensure that they promote good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour (paragraphs 9, 9(c)).

■ The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).

■ The proprietor must ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).

■ The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing-up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).

- The proprietor must ensure the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff, by ensuring that:
 - where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificates obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment (paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a) and 18(2)(d)).
- The proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question, and ensures that:
 - a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act
 - checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d) (paragraphs 21(1), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(v) and 21(3)(a)(vi)).
- The proprietor ensures that, in relation to the provision of information, they should publish:
 - particulars of any action specified in sub-paragraph (4) and maintain such particulars on the school's website or, where no such website exists, provide them to parents;
 - where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted;
 - a statement of the school's ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims;
 - particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
 - particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13;
 - particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders do not have a good working knowledge of the independent school standards. They have not ensured that all standards are met, including those relating to teaching, pupils' welfare and checks on staff suitability.
- The proprietor does not have a clear overview of the school's performance nor does he influence the quality of provision. He has not made arrangements to ensure that the headteacher is held to account for pupils' outcomes. As a result, there has been a decline in the school's performance since the last inspection.
- The headteacher and proprietor have not taken all necessary actions to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. For example, there has not been a review of the school's fire risk assessment for over 10 years. Before the end of the inspection, the headteacher immediately began to rectify some of the safety issues that inspectors had identified.
- The headteacher and proprietor do not have a clear strategic vision for the school. The school's improvement plan does not reflect current priorities and is not sharply focused on improving pupils' outcomes. The headteacher does not systematically evaluate the school's effectiveness to identify and address areas for improvement.
- The leadership of teaching is weak. Leaders do not have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are not effective in driving improvement. As a result, the quality of teaching is not consistently good and the progress of pupils is not as strong as it could be.
- Leadership is not sufficiently well distributed. Leaders, other than the headteacher, are not enabled to undertake any leadership activities. Leadership capacity is severely limited because, currently, almost all responsibilities fall onto the headteacher. This means that the rate of whole-school sustained improvement is significantly slowed.
- Leaders do not ensure that staff adhere to the school's policies. However, many policies have not been reviewed for several years and do not reflect current legislation and Department for Education guidance. In addition, leaders have not ensured that all the required information is available for parents on the school website.
- Teachers receive minimal professional development and training to help them enhance their teaching ability. Leaders provide them with very little guidance on how to improve their teaching. As a result, leaders are not taking action to improve weaker teaching. However, discussions between inspectors and school staff indicate that staff are very keen to learn and develop their practice.
- The school provides a broad curriculum. Pupils enjoy topic work and engage productively in their own research. For example, Year 5 explored the Great Fire of London and found out information about the fire. However, activities planned rarely enable pupils to gain an in-depth knowledge of specific topics.
- While pupils demonstrate an understanding of British values, leaders have not ensured that they are planned for effectively across all year groups. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

- The curriculum usually promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils' learning is effectively supported through various trips and visits. For example, Year 6 pupils go to Normandy in France to develop their French conversational skills and learn about World War Two. Pupils also achieve well in competitive sports, including rugby, football and hockey. They take part in local competitions, including the Nuneaton Festival of Arts, where pupils have received accolades for their creative work. A range of extra-curricular clubs are offered, including cookery, Lego and golf, which are well attended by pupils.
- The majority of parents value the work of the school and comment that they like 'its great sense of community'. They say that their children enjoy coming to school. A few parents expressed some concerns about the lack of communication between home and school in relation to their children's progress.
- The early years is effectively led and managed. The leader has an accurate view of the early years provision and has put in place robust plans to further enhance practice and improve outcomes for children.

Governance

- There are no governance arrangements at the school nor is there a proprietorial body. The headteacher makes almost all the decisions about school policies and procedures, and these decisions are not checked by anyone. This has left the school in a vulnerable position, especially when policies are not fit for purpose.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- There are multiple failings in safeguarding practice. The proprietor and headteacher have failed to carry out several of the statutory safer recruitment checks to ensure staff's suitability to work with children. However, by the end of the inspection, most of the required checks had been carried out for all staff and entered onto the school's single central register.
- Staff have a weak knowledge of current safeguarding issues because leaders have not provided regular, effective training and guidance. This means that staff are not well equipped to protect pupils from harm or to recognise the signs of abuse.
- Teachers are not familiar with the most recent statutory guidance about keeping children safe in education, published and updated by the Department for Education in September 2016. They lack the key knowledge and understanding about child protection, including the 'Prevent' duty, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation.
- Despite the weaknesses in staff's understanding of safeguarding, there is a clear reporting system to notify leaders of any concerns about a child potentially at risk of harm. Leaders keep accurate, clear and appropriately detailed records of all child protection concerns. They work closely with other agencies, as necessary, to ensure appropriate support for the child.
- The school has a safeguarding policy although it is not compliant with current statutory guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because not all pupils make consistently good progress. This is because teachers do not routinely use their assessments of pupils' prior learning to ensure that activities are well matched to their abilities.
- Some learning tasks are too repetitive, particularly in mathematics, and do not provide adequate challenge for pupils. This holds back the progress of the most able pupils. In other subjects, including history and science, there is an overreliance on mundane worksheets, which are not motivating and limit pupils' opportunities to demonstrate their full range of skills and knowledge.
- Teachers do not monitor learning closely enough in order to intervene, either to move learning on when the task is too easy, or to provide guidance when pupils are finding something difficult. As a result, pupils do not make good progress over time.
- Leaders have not ensured that there are effective systems in place to track pupils' progress over time carefully. Leaders are unclear as to whether or not individual pupils and different groups of pupils are making good progress. Leaders do not identify and monitor the performance of discrete groups, for example boys and girls, therefore they do not know how well pupils are achieving or when action is needed.
- The teaching of writing is not consistently good. Some pupils are able to write confidently and creatively, using a wide vocabulary and effective sentence structures. Other pupils' writing is less well developed and shows a poor command of punctuation, structure and style. Pupils' progression in handwriting varies depending on how much importance is placed on it by the teacher.
- The staff member responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has a good knowledge of their individual needs. She sets appropriate targets and carefully plans interventions to meet the specific needs of each pupil requiring extra support. Additional adults effectively support these pupils, enabling them to make good progress.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their written skills more widely across the curriculum. Pupils also apply some of their mathematical skills successfully through other subjects. For example, pupils solved mathematical problems relating to scale when reading maps in geography.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their modern foreign language skills because of lively, engaging teaching. For example, Year 2 pupils accurately and enthusiastically counted up to 20 in Spanish. They could also recognise comparisons between French and Spanish numbers.
- Most pupils read with confidence and enjoyment because the teaching of reading, including phonics, is effective. Pupils talk confidently about their favourite authors and understand the value of reading. One pupil's comment, 'Reading helps to extend your mind,' reflected the school's promotion of reading and the importance teachers place on it.
- Pupils attain a good level of competence in art. They are exposed to a wide range of artists and learn about their work. For example, Year 3 pupils produced some carefully drawn David Hockney-style coloured pencil drawings which showed attention to detail and good use of colour.

- Teachers set suitable homework tasks which reinforce learning in school. Pupils complete homework as requested, and this supports them in consolidating their understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because safeguarding arrangements are ineffective, which leaves pupils at risk. For example, staff recruitment processes are not thorough enough and there is a lack of staff training.
- Leaders ensure that most, but not all, of the required school policies relating to health, safety and welfare matters exist. However, some of these policies have not been reviewed for several years, nor are they always effectively implemented. As a result, pupils' welfare is compromised.
- There is too much variation in the quality of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) because leaders have not ensured that there is a well-planned, coherent scheme of work for PSHE. As a result, some classes are taught a programme of PSHE relevant to their personal and social needs, and others are not.
- Not all pupils have a good knowledge of bullying and the different forms it can take. However, pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know whom to talk to if they are worried about something.
- Pupils have some understanding of their responsibilities as citizens of modern Britain. They learn about different religions and have some knowledge of the key beliefs of various faiths including Sikhism, Islam and Christianity.
- Most pupils show a good level of commitment to their work. Their presentation is usually good because pupils take pride in their work. A few books have graffiti on the covers and are not as well cared for.
- Teachers know pupils well and there are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Staff praise and encourage pupils. Inspectors observed a rehearsal for the school's summer production. Pupils performed with self-confidence, flair and high levels of energy. They worked together collaboratively and celebrated each other's performances.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils display good manners and are courteous to each other, staff and visitors. Staff constantly reinforce these high expectations of behaviour. A small number of pupils do not always respond as quickly as they should to instructions given by lunchtime supervisors.
- Most pupils demonstrate good conduct in lessons. They respond well to teachers' requests, understand the school's behaviour system of rewards and sanctions, and follow school rules. A few pupils in key stage 1 occasionally show some restless behaviour when they have finished their work and are waiting for the teacher. Pupils move about the school in a calm, orderly manner.

- Pupils play well together on the playground and enjoy socialising with one another.
- Pupils' attendance is high compared to the national average for primary schools. Teachers register pupils' attendance accurately. However, they sometimes record absence incorrectly, using the wrong register codes. There have been no exclusions.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- There is too much variation in rates of progress from pupils' individual starting points. Some pupils make good progress, others do not achieve as well as they could.
- Leaders are unclear if pupils are meeting or exceeding their potential in different subjects, including English and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms that not enough pupils reach their potential across the curriculum.
- Too many of the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because they are not consistently challenged. This is because teachers provide limited opportunities for pupils to explore topics in sufficient depth.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with national expectations. In some instances, pupils' work shows that a few pupils attain at greater depth. However, inspectors found no convincing evidence that this was widespread and leaders were unable to confirm the proportion of pupils who achieve at the higher standards.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points because of appropriately tailored support.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because of effective teaching and regular practice. Pupils show good levels of comprehension and read with fluency and expression. Younger pupils use their phonics skills well to work out tricky words.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The provision in early years is inadequate because the school's overall safeguarding arrangements are ineffective. However, the early years leader takes all appropriate measures to ensure that the classroom environment is safe and reduces the risk of any hazards.
- Leadership of the early years is a strength of the school. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the provision's strengths and the further improvements that are needed. This is because she has carried out an effective self-evaluation of the setting, including an analysis of children's achievements. She has a comprehensive action plan which is helping to bring about further improvements.
- Children achieve well in pre-prep and Reception because of effective teaching. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- There is an exciting array of activities offered that children immerse themselves in. Staff provide resources which spark children's imagination and enable them to develop and extend their language skills. For example, a small group of children engaged in pretend play in the 'hairdressers' role-play area, booking appointments, discussing hair styles and taking payment.

- Reading is taught well and children show enjoyment in reading and listening to stories. The teaching of phonics is effective and helps children to make good progress in their reading.
- Children work together collaboratively and take turns. For example, a group of children enjoyed demonstrating their creative skills, creating jellyfish and sharing the finger glitter paint. They show pride in their work.
- Children behave well and respond quickly to teachers' instructions because of well-established routines, secure nurturing relationships and high expectations. Children are happy in the setting and show high levels of engagement and confidence.
- Teachers complete regular observations of children's learning and use these to inform the next steps in teaching. They share pupils' learning with parents via an online system. Staff ensure that children's assessments are accurate because they moderate work with other early years settings.

School details

Unique reference number	125789
DfE registration number	937/6091
Inspection number	10033565

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Simon Chamberlain
Headteacher	Oliver Pipe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,830–7,050
Telephone number	02476 641 722
Website	www.milvertonhsch.co.uk
Email address	reception@milvertonschool.com
Date of previous inspection	24–26 June 2014

Information about this school

- Milverton House School is an independent preparatory school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged 3 to 11 years. The school has an early years registered nursery at a different site which is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- An individual proprietor owns the school. The headteacher is solely responsible for the day-to-day running and organisation of the school.
- This school is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are a wide range of other ethnic groups represented.
- A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. No pupils currently have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- The school's last standard inspection was 24–26 June 2014.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes throughout the school. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' work across the curriculum.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their experience of school. A small selection of pupils read to inspectors and was asked about their reading habits.
- An inspector held a meeting with a group of staff to ask them about safeguarding arrangements and the support they received for their professional development.
- An inspector conducted a tour of the school site to look at the building and premises.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with the school's proprietor.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 27 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke with parents on the playground and considered 14 comments from Ofsted's free-text facility.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school documentation provided by the headteacher, including school policies, schemes of work, the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and pupils' test scores from some classes. Inspectors also gathered information from the school's website.

Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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