

Milverton House School

Park Street, Attleborough, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 4NS

Inspection dates

17 April 2018

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of pupils' learning in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education was inconsistent. Leaders had not ensured that there was a well-planned scheme of work for PSHE that encouraged respect for other people, and paid regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. In order to address this, the school's action plan proposed the implementation of a new PSHE scheme of work and regular, timetabled teaching of PSHE for all pupils.
- The school has adopted and implemented a new commercial scheme of work for PSHE, which is taught systematically on a weekly basis to all year groups. Pupils receive good-quality learning experiences across a broad range of PSHE topics. For example, some pupils have widened their knowledge about the dangers of smoking and others have learned about the importance of respecting differences. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards, and a good understanding of, different religions.
- Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to experience and understand democratic processes. For example, pupils have recently elected a school council. A local Member of Parliament visited the school and talked to pupils about his work during the school's 'Parliament week', providing them with a practical insight into the role of politics in society and decision-making. Pupils speak favourably about the school's revised approach to PSHE and can articulate their new learning well.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Paragraph 3(g)

- At the time of the last inspection, leaders did not have a robust framework for assessment. The action plan proposed the implementation of a new tracking system to record and analyse pupils' attainment, and identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders have implemented a new whole-school assessment system for recording pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. This is still in the early stages of implementation; leaders are beginning to use the system to plot pupils' attainment and make judgements about how different year groups are performing. Leaders have not yet used the assessment information to analyse the performance of different groups of

pupils, although this is planned once there is sufficient assessment data to draw conclusions about pupils' progress over time.

- Leaders now meet with teachers on a termly basis to discuss individual pupils' progress. They identify any pupils falling behind and use assessment information to set targets and help them catch up. This strategy is beginning to have a positive impact on increasing rates of progress.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching was not good and pupils were not making sufficient progress. In order to address this, the school's action plan sets out a range of strategies to improve the quality of teaching. This included making changes to teachers' planning, purchasing new resources and providing training for teachers to improve their teaching skills and raise expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Leaders have been partially successful in implementing new strategies to improve teaching, although some aspects of their work have been slow to get going. This is especially the case in relation to providing training for teachers on securing high-quality learning, which has been limited to date. Leaders explained that delays in starting this work were, in part, due to their urgent focus on addressing safeguarding, and health and safety matters. Leaders acknowledge that their attention must now focus firmly on improving the quality of teaching.
- While leaders have brought about improvements to teachers' planning and delivery, there remains a wide variation in the quality. A few teachers do not show a secure grasp of intended learning outcomes. In addition, they do not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning when planning. This leads to tasks for pupils that do not challenge the full ability range within a class and hampers progress, particularly of the most able pupils.
- Leaders have purchased new mathematics resources that are helping teachers to target work more closely to pupils' differing needs. For example, the lower-attaining pupils start with easier work to build their confidence, while the most able begin with more challenging mathematical problems to maximise time for learning. This approach is supporting better progress in mathematics. However, teachers rarely provide pupils with open-ended, problem-solving mathematical tasks that enable them to demonstrate their full range of skills and knowledge.
- Leaders have not yet addressed the issues related to the teaching of writing. A significant proportion of pupils do not make enough progress in writing because the quality of teaching is too variable and not consistently good. A few pupils, notably the older pupils, write skilfully with imagination and a good awareness of audience. For example, Year 6 pupils produced some excellent short stories for the BBC Radio 2 500 Words story competition. However, standards in writing for key stage 1 pupils are typically lower than age-related expectations.
- Therefore, standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii)

- Previously, pupils did not have a good understanding of fundamental British values because teachers did not teach them well and they were not actively promoted. In addition, teachers did not teach pupils about all of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. The action plan included a proposal to ensure that fundamental British values were actively promoted and embedded into the curriculum, across the school. Furthermore, teachers would incorporate the teaching of the protected characteristics through their PSHE units of work.
- Leaders have made a concerted effort to raise pupils' awareness and understanding of fundamental British values. Displays of pupils' work and informative posters around the school related to fundamental British values indicate the importance leaders place on this area. Consequently, pupils' understanding is developing. The school has adopted a specific policy on fundamental British values that sets out its approach to incorporating British values into day-to-day school life.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b),

- At the time of the previous inspection, there were serious failings in safeguarding arrangements. The school's action plan proposed several measures to address the issues, mostly relating to increasing staff's knowledge and understanding about a range of safeguarding matters.
- Leaders took urgent action to address the ineffective safeguarding practice immediately following the last inspection. All staff have undertaken a suite of extensive face-to-face and online training to ensure that they are well prepared to deal with a wide range of child protection concerns, should they arise. They are much more knowledgeable about a range of safeguarding topics, including female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and honour-based violence.
- Safeguarding is now effective. Leaders have worked hard to create a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils are taught about personal safety in the curriculum and demonstrate good knowledge and awareness. Leaders have rewritten the school's safeguarding policy and shared this with all staff and volunteers. The policy is fit for purpose and takes into account guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It is published on the school's website.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(c)

- Previously, leaders had not ensured that there was a log of sanctions for instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils. The action plan proposed that a sanctions log would be created and maintained.
- Leaders have a sanctions log in place and use this to keep detailed records of serious incidents of misbehaviour. Sampling of the log indicates that leaders follow up concerns thoroughly and hold discussions with parents when necessary in an effort to prevent negative behaviour from reoccurring.

- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraphs 12, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, teachers were using incorrect codes in the attendance register. Inspectors also found that there was not an effective risk assessment policy in place and there had been no fire risk assessment for over 10 years.
- Teachers now use the correct register codes in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance. The school's admission register contains all appropriate information.
- A suitable fire risk assessment has now been undertaken by a commercial company to identify any potential fire risks. Leaders have responded promptly to the risk assessment's recommendations, including adding more signage, fitting new smoke detectors and repairing the external fire escape staircase. The school now has two trained fire wardens.
- Leaders have completed a range of appropriate risk assessments to determine risks associated with various activities and events. Staff have put in place suitable control measures to reduce risks successfully.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(d), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that leaders were carrying out all required pre-employment checks on new staff. The school's action plan took into account this failing.
- Leaders now ensure that all required checks are completed prior to a person taking up employment. Where there is a delay in receiving the outcome of a check, leaders undertake a risk assessment and put in place arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The headteacher conducts a monthly check of the school's single central record and records any follow-up actions as necessary.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Part 6. Provision of information

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)

- At the time of the last inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that certain required information was made available to parents of pupils, prospective parents, the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate. The school's action plan included arrangements to ensure that this issue was addressed.
- Leaders now publish all required information on the school's website. For example, all necessary information about the proprietor's contact information is available. Leaders have overhauled the school's website and it includes the particulars of all required policies, including the first aid policy.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(c)

- Previously, leaders were not actively promoting the well-being of pupils due to failings related to safeguarding and weaknesses in the PSHE curriculum. The school's action plan included measures to address both of these areas.
- Leaders' appropriate actions to address weaknesses in safeguarding, combined with the implementation of a new PSHE scheme of work, have had a positive impact on promoting pupils' well-being.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, the proprietor and leaders did not demonstrate that they had the knowledge and understanding to ensure that the independent school standards were met. The proprietor and headteacher had not taken all necessary actions to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. Leaders did not have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. Consequently, the school's overall effectiveness was judged inadequate.
- Leaders have wasted no time in responding to the findings from the previous inspection in relation to safeguarding and health and safety matters. They have successfully implemented the actions set out in the school's action plan. Shortly after the publication of the report, the school commissioned the support of an educational consultant to assist the headteacher with action planning for improvement. This enabled leaders to write an effective, strategic action plan with measurable criteria to judge their progress in meeting objectives for improvement.
- The proprietor has arranged for an independent 'link person' to visit the school and meet with the leadership team on a weekly basis. This person keeps the proprietor regularly informed of the school's developments and enables him to have a better overview of the school's performance. However, despite this arrangement, there is no validation or moderation of the headteacher's judgements about the quality of teaching and learning by anyone with educational expertise.
- Leaders now monitor the quality of teaching and learning with much greater regularity. As a result, they have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses related to teaching. Following lesson observations, leaders usually identify what teachers need to do to improve, although they do not routinely follow up these areas for development quickly enough. This means that teaching is not yet improving as rapidly as it could.
- Leaders' lesson observations have mostly been related to PSHE because this has been a whole-school focus. Leaders recognise that their next round of monitoring should be more closely linked to other areas requiring improvement, such as the teaching of writing.
- Leaders have begun to create opportunities for teachers to share good practice and learn from each another. Teachers value these opportunities and say that they help them to discover new approaches to teaching different concepts in the curriculum.
- The headteacher now ensures that leadership and management responsibilities are shared more widely with other members of the leadership team. This is allowing him

more time to work strategically and drive forward the school's improvement agenda. However, leaders do not yet have an effective strategy for the leadership of the curriculum. This means that developments in subject areas, for example English, are not as cohesive as they could be. This slows the pace at which teaching can improve.

- The proprietor and headteacher have a much better understanding of the independent school standards. They have taken decisive action to begin to resolve or address many of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Consequently, many of the standards that were unmet at the last inspection have now been met. However, leaders acknowledge that there is still further work to do to improve teaching and raising pupils' levels of achievement.
- Therefore, the standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school does not comply with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have started work on writing the school's accessibility plan; however, this is not yet complete.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the time of the previous inspection, the early years provision was graded inadequate because the school's overall safeguarding arrangements were ineffective. All other aspects of the early years were good because of effective early years leadership.
- Because of leaders' whole-school improvements to safeguarding, the school now meets the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS), safeguarding and welfare requirements. Pupils are safe and well cared for in EYFS.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	125789
DfE registration number	937/6091
Inspection number	10048914

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Simon Chamberlain
Headteacher	Oliver Pipe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,830–7,050
Telephone number	02476 641722
Website	www.milvertonschool.com
Email address	reception@milvertonschool.com
Date of previous standard inspection	4–6 July 2017

Information about this school

- Milverton House School is an independent preparatory school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged three 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 responsible for the day-to-day running and organisation of the school, supported by a deputy headteacher.
- 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 on 4 to 6 July 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged inadequate at the standard inspection in July 2017.
- The school submitted an action plan outlining its proposals to address the unmet standards. This action plan was evaluated in January 2018. The proposed action plan was judged acceptable.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents including school policies, pupils' assessment information, checks made on staff's suitability to work with children, risk assessments, the admission and attendance registers, and records relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The inspector briefly visited classrooms with the headteacher to observe pupils learning.
- The inspector held discussions with a group of pupils, a small group of staff, and members of the senior leadership team. The inspector held a telephone discussion with the proprietor the day after the on-site inspection.

Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) 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
 - 3(c) involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

The school does not comply with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- Part 1, paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii) and paragraph 3(g)
- Part 2, paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii)
- Part 3, paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(c), 12, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)
- Part 4, paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(d), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi)
- Part 6, paragraph 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)
- Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(c).

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