

Milton Road Primary School

Ascham Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 2BD

Inspection dates

22 to 23 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have ensured that the necessary actions have been taken to improve the school since the previous inspection. They have created a supportive ethos that encourages pupils to achieve their best.
- Progress in reading and mathematics is strong. It is rapidly improving in writing across the school.
- Leaders have brought about a greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers are supported well to improve their teaching.
- Teaching leads to good outcomes because teachers plan interesting and engaging lessons. Learning activities are well matched to the needs of the pupils.
- Teaching assistants are well trained. As a result, they provide effective support for the pupils they work with.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of the curriculum. Topics enable pupils to gain the knowledge they need to be successful in the subjects they study. Pupils enjoy special learning days such as 'fantastical Fridays'.
- Governors know the school well. They challenge and support leaders effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils' health and well-being are very well promoted through a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- School attendance is in line with the national average. However, there are a small number of pupils whose progress is hindered by low attendance.
- Provision in the early years is good and improving. These improvements need to be further embedded so that more children leave Reception with a good level of development.
- Most staff expect pupils to present their work clearly and neatly. However, there is inconsistency in the presentation of work in some subjects.
- Systems used to check the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not fully effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop teaching and assessment in the early years so that more children leave Reception with a good level of development.
- Ensure greater consistency in the presentation of pupils' work across all subjects.
- Improve the attendance and progress of the small number of pupils whose attendance is below average.
- Ensure that school systems provide leaders with a clearer understanding of the progress that pupils with SEND are making.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including governors, have taken effective action to improve the standard of education in the school. They have successfully addressed the actions for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Staff agree that the school has improved.
- Expectations of pupils are high. Leaders are keen to support all pupils to achieve their best academically, socially and personally. One parent, reflecting the views of others, stated that, 'There is a strong emphasis on values such as kindness and curiosity, which are so important to the children's well-being.'
- The quality of teaching and learning is good because there are effective systems in place to support staff to improve their teaching. Staff receive personalised training and coaching in addition to whole-school training. Staff are appreciative of the support they receive to improve their teaching.
- Subject leaders have received appropriate training that has enabled them to fulfil their role effectively. They analyse pupils' progress information, monitor the delivery of the curriculum and look at work in pupils' books. Leaders use this information to adjust the curriculum and plan subject training. As a result, standards are improving across a range of subjects.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that ignites pupils' imagination and fosters a love of learning. The curriculum provides pupils with ample opportunities to study a full range of subjects through interesting topics. Leaders give subjects such as art, design and technology and music a high profile. They have identified the knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. Learning activities are planned so pupils build on their existing knowledge.
- Pupils describe learning as fun because the curriculum provides opportunities for them to go on a wide range of trips and local visits. The school makes good use of the facilities and rich culture of Cambridge to enhance pupils' learning. Focus days such as 'fantastical Friday' make learning enjoyable and provide opportunities for pupils to solve problems and develop reasoning skills. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils had 'rhubarb day'. Using rhubarb as the theme, pupils completed written, scientific, mathematical and artistic activities based around rhubarb. However, the highlight for the pupils was being able to make and eat rhubarb crumble.
- The curriculum is supplemented by a wide range of clubs to suit the varied interests of pupils. These include dance, netball, art, Spanish, yoga, mindfulness, lacemaking and choir. These activities along with the wide range of visits, trips, visiting speakers and curriculum topics contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well to promote the health and wellbeing of pupils. The funding has been used to provide staff training, sports equipment and play equipment that pupils enjoy playing with at breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate in a range of competitions. Pupils enjoy their sports lessons.

- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Once pupils' barriers to learning are identified, appropriate support is swiftly put into place. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress.
- The inclusion manager shares her expertise effectively. She monitors the work of the teaching assistants to ensure they are meeting the needs of the pupils. Leaders use their knowledge of pupils' needs and interests to plan engaging, personalised support programmes. As a result, pupils are making good overall progress. However, although the progress of pupils with SEND is carefully monitored, the systems currently in place do not provide leaders with an accurate picture of the progress made by pupils.
- Most parents feel the school is providing a good standard of education for their children. Comments such as 'an excellent school', 'proud to be part of a vibrant school community' and 'a great school well run by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors' reflect the views of many parents.

Governance of the school

- The governing body are committed to providing the best quality education and care for pupils in the school. They set high standards for themselves and school leaders. The governors ensure they are trained in the latest guidance in order to fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Governors routinely check safeguarding practices.
- Governors are clear about what the school does well and the areas that need further improvement. They are knowledgeable about standards within the school because they ask leaders challenging questions and monitor their work through visits and conversations with staff and pupils. The governors resource committee has worked well with leaders to manage and reduce a deficit budget. Governors have a very clear vision for the future of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that the appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all adults. Staff training is routine, and all staff are trained in the latest guidance. Staff are kept up to date with any changes in practice through staff meetings.
- Record-keeping is thorough, and all staff referrals are quickly picked up by the safeguarding team. Relationships between the school and external agencies are well established. The safeguarding team monitor the progress of any referrals they make to agencies to ensure they are dealt with quickly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that adults will listen to them if they have a problem. School records confirm that bullying is rare.
- Pupils have a good, age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Older pupils are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions and whether they could be putting themselves at risk.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan learning activities that are matched well to pupils' needs. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and classrooms are a 'hive of activity'.
- Learning activities are interesting and capture pupils' imagination. Pupils describe learning as 'fun' because the teachers make it interesting, with practical activities and visits.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to develop pupils' learning through probing questioning and activities designed to develop pupils' vocabulary.
- As a result of specialist training, teaching assistants are skilful in supporting the pupils they work with. They understand pupils' needs and how best to help them make progress.
- Pupils are developing their fluency in mathematics. They have access to a varied range of resources to support their learning. Pupils in all year groups are provided with opportunities to develop their reasoning skills through problem-solving activities. For example, Year 6 pupils were working on enlarging a Lego man. Once they had worked out the scale, they had to accurately draw their man on large sheets of paper.
- The teaching of writing has improved as teachers are now providing pupils with precise guidance on what they are expected to produce. There is a clear sequence of learning activities that develop pupils' knowledge as they progress through their work.
- Phonics is taught well. In Reception, children are able to recognise sounds and can find them in words. Older pupils use their phonics knowledge to decode unfamiliar words with accuracy. They are also taught to use a range of other strategies to understand the meaning of words they do not know.
- Homework is tailored to pupils' needs and consolidates their learning. Homework activities are varied and cover the full range of subjects.
- Most teachers expect pupils to set their work out neatly and with care. Inspectors saw some excellent examples of well-presented work, especially in writing books. However, the same standard of presentation was not always seen in other subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's values are at the core of all aspects of school life. Pupils are proud to be part of the school. They are very accepting and have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. Older pupils told inspectors that moral stories help them to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes towards their learning. They value education and enjoy the challenges teachers provide. Pupils particularly like being able to reflect on what

they already know and what they would like to find out at the start of a new topic.

- Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles. They understand what constitutes a healthy diet, the importance of exercise and how lifestyle choices can affect their health and wellbeing. Pupils learn how to cook healthy meals. Pupils enjoy PE lessons and value the opportunity to participate in competitions against other schools. Personal, social and health education lessons provide the opportunity for pupils to discuss emotional health, risk taking and how to stay safe in a variety of situations. Older pupils are knowledgeable about national organisations such as Childline.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to discuss philosophical and moral questions. Debates such as 'what makes my identity?' and 'dinner ladies don't count' provide the opportunity for pupils to consider their opinions and those of others.
- The school goes the 'extra mile' to understand each pupil's specific needs and it does all that it can to ensure they are met. Several parents commented positively about the support their children have received. Typical comments included, 'The school arranged a care plan for my child so they could attend school after an accident,' and 'The school put in timely action to support my child to improve their behaviour. Result? Happy child, happy family and happy school.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They show respect to each other and to adults. They chat happily with their friends during breaktime and lunchtime. They play well together.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils know and follow the routines of the classrooms. They respond well to adults' requests. Classroom disruption is minimal.
- Pupils say that behaviour has improved in the school with the introduction of the current behaviour management system. They enjoy and appreciate the rewards they receive for good conduct.
- Staff agree that behaviour in the school is good and that they are supported well in managing pupils' behaviour. School records show that strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are effective.
- Most pupils enjoy coming to school. As a result, attendance is in line with the national average. However, there are a small proportion of pupils whose attendance is below average. This is having a detrimental effect on their learning. The school is working with a number of agencies and with pupils' families, but the low attendance of these pupils is still negatively affecting their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the progress of Year 6 pupils in reading was well above average. Progress in mathematics was also above average. Progress in writing was average, having improved from the previous year.
- The proportions of pupils leaving key stage 2 having attained at the expected standard, and at greater depth, in reading, writing and mathematics have been above national averages for the last three years.
- Pupils also make good progress in key stage 1, especially in reading and mathematics. In 2018, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard, and working at greater depth, in reading, writing and mathematics were above average.
- As a result of improved phonics teaching, the percentage of pupils in Year 1 who pass the phonics screening check is typically in line with, or above, average.
- Pupils currently in the school continue to make good progress. This is especially evident in writing. For example, the change of approach to teaching has resulted in pupils in Year 1 writing extended stories, often of over a page in length, using accurate punctuation and interesting vocabulary.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is good. This is because teachers ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of the necessary knowledge and skills required to be successful in these subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils can explain how a spit is formed by the action of longshore drifts, using technical language accurately.
- The progress of pupils with SEND is good. As a result of the support they receive, pupils gain confidence as learners and this enables them to make strong progress from their starting points.
- Historically, the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils has been below that of pupils with similar starting points nationally. However, work in pupils' books indicates that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving. More pupils are making good progress and some, especially the most able, are making particularly strong progress.
- As a result of good teaching and high expectations, pupils are well prepared for secondary education by the end of Year 6. Pupils told inspectors they felt prepared because 'teachers have set us harder work and made us more independent'.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have transformed the early years provision. Children now learn in a bright and stimulating area. They also have access to a well-equipped outside area that provides them with plenty of opportunity to support their physical development.
- The early years leader provides strong leadership. She has introduced a different style of curriculum, one that is designed to better meet the needs of individual children. As a result, children enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are in line with or above

those typically expected. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has improved to just above average. However, given their starting points, more children should attain at this standard.

- Assessment methods are accurate and used well to adapt learning to suit the needs of the children. Challenges are in place for all children, especially the most able. Challenge is provided through adult questioning and guidance, and by pupils setting their own challenges. For example, designing a computerised maze game and an adding game. Children are rightly proud of what they achieve and are rewarded with challenge certificates.
- Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Writing opportunities are built into as many tasks as possible. For example, writing a set of instructions for building a bridge. Children frequently choose to write and there are many examples of their writing in and around the classroom.
- The daily phonics session has improved children's reading. Children enjoy books and reading. Children were proud to show the books they had made to the inspectors.
- Children are provided with activities that enable them to explore their environment and develop an enquiring mind. For example, children demonstrated concentration as they were solving problems for their friend 'Hetty the hedgehog'. They listened well, followed instructions and were articulate when answering questions.
- Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the early years provision. They are pleased with the progress being made by their children, how they are taught and the balance between work and play. Typical comments include, 'my child is thriving', 'a superb transition from pre-school' and 'there is a lot of individual support. My child has settled in well'.

School details

Unique reference number	133930
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10088668

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Iain Thomas and Matthew Hodgson
Headteacher	Dr Michael Catchpool
Telephone number	01223 712 333
Website	www.miltonroadschool.org.uk
Email address	office@miltonroad.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 to 7 December 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are above those seen nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. They were joined by senior leaders for some of these observations. Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 4. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke formally with two groups of pupils about their learning experiences in school. They had informal conversations with pupils during playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the safeguarding lead, attendance manager, inclusion manager, the leader of the early years, subject leaders and five members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, pupils' progress and attendance, and records of the school's monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education. Inspectors also examined the school's plans for improvement and information available on the school's website.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the 155 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 95 free-text responses.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Caroline Parry, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rachael Judd	Ofsted Inspector
Kay Tims	Ofsted Inspector

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