

# Inspection of Milefield Primary School

Milefield Lane, Grimethorpe, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 7BH

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Inspection dates: 6–7 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils feel safe in school. This is a school where staff care deeply about the well-being of pupils. Pupils show respect for each other and the adults who work with them.

Pupils told inspectors that it is good to be a pupil in this school because they are given responsibility to help other children. Pupil leaders help to organise games at lunch and to sort out any occasional falling out. The pupil parliament has agreed a set of rules for behaviour in class.

Usually, pupils behave well and play happily together. Bullying is not tolerated. It is dealt with swiftly when it occurs. Behaviour has improved round school. However, some pupils still lose concentration in lessons when expectations are not high.

Pupils get many chances to take part in extra activities outside of lessons. Visits to York help pupils learn about the Vikings and residentials in the Lake District broaden pupils' experiences.

New leadership is making a real difference. The acting headteacher has brought about many improvements, but there is still more work to do. Staff morale is high and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Staff are very positive about the professional development given to them by leaders and the trust.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have designed a curriculum that is well organised. Subject content is now taught in the right order. Pupils understand their work better and are remembering more over time.

Some pupils have not achieved well because they have had many different teachers. Leaders have taken steps to stabilise staffing and improve the curriculum. Mathematics is well taught. Teaching in other subjects is variable because expectations are not high. In Years 5 and 6, expectations are high, so pupils produce good work.

Assessment of pupils' learning in subjects other than mathematics is variable. Gaps in learning and misconceptions are usually addressed quickly in Years 5 and 6, but this is not done consistently in other years.

Pupils' writing skills have not developed well. There are few opportunities for them to write at length and develop their skills. There are examples of high-quality writing in history. Older pupils wrote in detail about The Blitz and could discuss its effects on London during World War 2.

The teaching of phonics has improved in key stage 1 and early years. Staff now

teach phonics in a systematic way. Books pupils read at home and in school are well matched to pupils' phonics skills in early years and key stage 1. However, some pupils do not get the challenge they need to help them catch up quickly. Weaker readers in Years 3 and 4 are given books that can be too hard for them to read. This puts some of them off reading. Older pupils enjoy reading and are confident when reading out loud. There are high-quality class texts that pupils enjoy. Many pupils take books home to read.

Children settle well into early years. Relationships between staff and children are warm. Parents are positive about the opportunities to see their children learning. The new leader has checked the quality of the provision and is in the process of improving teaching. Staff do not use assessment well to identify children's next steps in learning. This slows the pace of learning because activities do not meet children's needs as well as they should. Children listen attentively at story time and enjoy voting for which book is to be read to them.

Leaders do not give staff enough information to help disadvantaged pupils learn well. This is also the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's vulnerable pupils and families team keeps a close eye on these groups of pupils to make sure their pastoral needs are met. The 'walking bus', prizes and certificates are improving attendance. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are still absent from school too often. This slows their learning.

Pupils could not tell us about different faiths or religious beliefs. They have a limited understanding of other cultures. This indicates that the curriculum for pupils' personal development needs further enrichment.

Parents have mixed views about the school's work. Some say they are not well-informed about their children's education. There is not enough information on the school's website about what children are learning.

Leaders, new governors and the trust are committed to the school and its pupils. They know what needs to improve. Governors are challenging and supporting leaders to overcome the school's weaknesses.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders provide support for pupils and their families when needed. They work closely with parents and external agencies to keep children safe. Staff know what to do should they have concerns about children's well-being. The school's safeguarding team deals with concerns about pupils quickly. Record-keeping is detailed, including any follow up actions. Leaders make sure all adults are safe to work with children. Procedures to keep children safe at the breakfast club are appropriate. Pupils understand how to keep safe online. They know how to report any issues to adults.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has gone through a period of turbulence in staffing and leadership over recent years. This has resulted in standards being below average. Leaders should build on new curriculum plans and staff training to make the quality of education good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge and expectations vary. Assessment is not used well to plan challenging work for all children. Leaders should make sure teachers have secure subject knowledge and high expectations. They should make sure staff use assessment information well when planning. Leaders should check that pupils write in a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders have not provided teachers with enough information about pupils with SEND. Teachers are not clear about overcoming barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. These groups of pupils are absent from school too often and are falling behind in their learning. Leaders should make sure all pupils attend well. They should provide detailed information and training for staff so they can support pupils well.
- Children have not benefited from the teaching of phonics in early years and key stage 1. Too few pupils have achieved the expected phonics standard by the end of Year 1. Leaders should make sure teaching leads to swift improvement in pupils' phonics skills.
- Some younger pupils in key stage 2 struggle with the books they are reading. Leaders need to make sure that reading books used at home and in school match pupils' needs in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils do not have a good understanding of world religions and cultures. Leaders need to strengthen pupils' personal development. They need to make sure pupils have a good understanding of world religions and cultures.
- Parents have mixed views about the school's work. Some say they have limited information about what their children are learning. This prevents them making a positive contribution. Leaders should make parents aware of the content taught to their children. Governors should ensure the school's website meets government requirements.

### How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106617
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110674
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	280
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Hickey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paula Murray
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.milefieldprimary.org.uk">www.milefieldprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 July 2015

## Information about this school

- Currently, the school is led by an acting headteacher.
- There has been significant staff turnover since the last inspection, including a new deputy headteacher and early years leader.
- The local authority established an interim executive board to govern the school and hold leaders to account for their work.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school is an associate member of Hoyland Common Academy Trust. The trust provides professional development for staff and supports leadership and management. The chief executive of the trust is a member of the interim executive board.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life.
- We met with the acting headteacher, other leaders, and a wide range of staff

about their work. We spoke to the school improvement partner, members of the interim executive board and the chief executive officer of Hoyland Academy Trust. We also spoke to some parents.

- We scrutinised a wide range of documentation relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils. We checked the school's central record, which includes the checks made on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader. We spoke to staff about safeguarding and child protection.
- The inspection particularly focused on reading, mathematics, writing and physical education. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection. We spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. We held discussions with teachers and pupils. We also listened to some pupils read.
- We took account of the views of staff, pupils and parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Jim McGrath, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Fulthorpe	Ofsted Inspector

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