

Inspection of Middleton Community Primary School

Rectory Road, Middleton, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3NR

Inspection dates: 17–18 December 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Insufficient evidence
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Middleton Primary is a friendly and welcoming community. Pupils are polite, eager to learn and excited to speak to visitors about their work. They learn to read quickly when they join the school. Pupils of all ages like reading. Key stage 2 pupils are especially enthusiastic about the new range of books available in the school library this year. Pupils enjoy singing in the local church, their after-school clubs and outdoor learning. The confidence younger pupils showed as they acted out their Christmas play and sang word-perfect carols was impressive. Most parents and carers are extremely positive about the quality of education that the school provides.

Pupils are thoughtful and often very kind to each other. We saw older pupils helping younger children several times during the inspection. Pupils know the rules. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils say that they feel safe and that there is always an adult they can speak with if they are worried. Pupils have good opportunities to get involved in supporting the whole school community by taking on jobs such as prefect or pupil librarian. School council members represent other pupils' views very well.

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

Senior leaders are keen for Middleton pupils to do as well as they can. The curriculum focuses on securing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside their academic achievement. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and to 'have a go'.

In reading, writing and mathematics, teachers are clear about what pupils know and what they need to do next. Reading is a high priority across the school. Younger pupils learn how to read quickly. This is because they are very confident to use the sounds that letters represent to help them to read unfamiliar words. They are excited to talk about their books, often using complex language from an early stage. Pupils from Year 3 and Year 4 spoke enthusiastically about their 'reading challenge'. They explained thoughtfully why some books were more popular than others.

The English curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced to ensure that pupils develop their writing skills effectively over time. In key stage 1, pupils enjoyed writing about their own ideas of 'What happens next?' in the stories they were reading. They could link their ideas to topic work on rivers and recent writing about their visit to a nature reserve.

Key stage 2 pupils showed mature attitudes as they discussed preparation for a debate linked to a piece of persuasive writing on climate change. The high-quality writing seen in Year 6 topic books, for example on the features and importance of rivers, was not consistently well matched across subjects.

The range of work seen in geography, history and science was limited. Revised curriculum plans and a suitable programme of training aim to ensure that all staff

are confident to deliver well-sequenced learning in subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Teachers' planning for learning in mathematics has improved. Across key stages, most pupils are confident to use mathematical skills to solve problems and to explain the reasoning behind their answers. The relatively new subject leader is checking to make sure that the needs of pupils in mixed-aged classes are consistently well met.

Working closely with the trust's special educational needs coordinator, teachers adapt their planning appropriately to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers do not always make the best use of teaching assistants' support for pupils in lessons.

Pupils behave well and are eager to learn. Curriculum changes are ensuring that they are well prepared for secondary education. Most older pupils act as good role models for younger children.

Leaders are mindful of staff well-being. The locality committee and the trust provide effective support and challenge for school leaders. Most parents are very positive about the school's work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take appropriate action to keep pupils safe. Regular training makes sure that staff know the things to look out for that might suggest a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff understand how to use school's systems if they need to raise a concern.

Where necessary, leaders follow up on concerns with other organisations, such as the local authority, so that pupils have the support that they need.

Senior leaders, including the locality committee and the trust, make sure that all the required checks are complete before new staff join the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet consistently well planned and sequenced in all subjects. Leaders have acted to make the necessary changes. They are training staff to deliver the revised model. They should now make regular checks to ensure that, across the full range of subjects, the training leads to curriculum content that is taught in enough depth, in the most effective order, and revisited at the most appropriate time. Checks should also ensure that teachers' planning is consistently well focused on meeting the needs of pupils working in mixed-aged classes.

- Leaders should make sure that teachers work closely with teaching assistants to plan the most effective ways of deploying support in lessons, so that no time is wasted, and pupils continue to achieve well.

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 are the provider and you are 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

Unique reference number	143806
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10110174
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dawn Carman-Jones
Headteacher	Gail Jerman
Website	www.yoxvalleypartnership.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Middleton Community Primary School converted to become an academy in December 2016.
- The school is part of the Consortium Multi-Academies Trust.
- The headteacher has oversight of Middleton and two other schools. Collectively, the schools are known as the Yox Valley Partnership.
- The partnership shares other senior leaders as well as the headteacher.
- Middleton is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Children are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Leaders offer a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher, other leaders, staff (including the chair of the local governing body, known as the locality committee), and the chair of the trust.
- We visited a range of lessons and looked at learning plans. We spoke with pupils

and staff and looked at work in books.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, we reviewed the school's website and the school's policies. We met with the school's designated safeguarding officer and spoke with staff and pupils. We checked the school's records of safer recruitment of staff.
- We took account of 15 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 15 comments that parents made through the free-text service. The seven responses to Ofsted's survey for school staff were also reviewed.
- We considered the following subjects as part of the inspection: mathematics, geography, reading and writing.
- Because there were fewer than five children in early years, and therefore insufficient evidence to make an early years' inspection judgement, an amnesty was granted.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Mitcheson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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