

Inspection of Millfields Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Willington Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 9EB

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Millfields Primary School. They are greeted by staff at the beginning of the day with a warm and friendly smile. Teachers expect pupils to work hard in lessons, concentrate and do well. Pupils learn subjects that are interesting and fun. However, in some subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because the key information that pupils should know, and when it should be taught, is not clearly defined within curriculum plans.

Most pupils feel safe and move around the school in an orderly manner. They are polite and well mannered. Pupils understand that there is always someone in school to support them if they have any worries or concerns. They told inspectors that adults deal with bullying effectively and it soon stops. However, at times, behaviour in class can be disruptive. In addition, there are some pupils who do not attend school on a regular basis.

Pupils play happily in the playground and make friendships across year groups. They happily take on roles and responsibilities as school councillors, buddies to the younger children and digital leaders.

Parents and carers are positive about the school and hold leaders and staff in high regard.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a significant period of turbulence, with many staff changes taking place. The staff team has now stabilised. Staff, including teachers new to the profession, are proud to work at the school.

Senior leaders understand what needs to be done to improve the quality of education provided by the school. They are fully aware of the challenges that lie ahead.

Pupils are taught the full range of the national curriculum subjects. Some subjects, such as reading and science, are carefully planned and sequenced. As a result, pupils are learning all the knowledge they need to and are remembering it. However, in other subjects, too much is left to chance. Curriculum plans in these subjects do not set out in a logical manner the essential knowledge and vocabulary that pupils must learn. In addition, some curriculum plans do not detail the important knowledge that children must acquire in the early years to help them to learn in key stage 1. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as well as they could do.

Leaders in subjects such as reading and science monitor their areas of responsibility well. They check curriculum plans, review work in pupils' books and visit lessons.

This helps subject leaders to ensure that the planned curriculum is being taught as intended. The monitoring of other subjects is not as well developed as that of reading and science. This is because some aspects of the monitoring of these subjects were paused due to the restrictions of COVID-19.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics which starts in the early years. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they know. Those who have fallen behind are provided with extra support to help them catch up. Older pupils talk confidently about their favourite authors and the different types of books that they like to read.

Some teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons and deal with misconceptions well. Pupils, typically, can recall prior learning and are beginning to make connections across subjects. For example, work in pupils' books shows that they have used their mathematical knowledge to calculate the distance from the school to Eastham village on a geography field trip.

Since returning to school after the pandemic, some pupils have had difficulty in managing their emotions, which disrupts learning. Leaders have taken swift action by revising the school's behaviour management policy and providing additional training for staff. However, it is far too soon to see the impact of these actions.

There are some pupils who do not attend school on a regular basis. Others arrive late. This prevents pupils from learning as much as they should.

Leaders meet the emotional needs of pupils with SEND effectively. These pupils are involved in all aspects of school life. With support, they access the same curriculum as their friends. If needed, the school buys in help from outside agencies to ensure these pupils receive the support that they need.

Governors are proud of their school. Many of the governors are new to their role and do not have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. Consequently, they are not able to offer the same level of support and challenge as the small number of more experienced governors.

Pupils enjoy a varied range of trips and after-school clubs which make a positive contribution to their personal development. They talked excitedly about a forthcoming trip to the pantomime. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures, and regularly raise money for charitable causes. Leaders are considerate of pupils' mental health and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff recognise that everyone has a responsibility to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

All staff have had recent training and are able to identify the indicators of abuse or neglect. They understand the procedures they should follow should they be concerned about a pupil's welfare. Leaders ensure that families facing challenging circumstances get the support they need in a timely manner.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when online. They understand the dangers of disclosing their password to others or talking to strangers online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects in the curriculum are not monitored effectively or well planned and sequenced. Curriculum plans in these subjects do not clearly and consistently identify the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils must acquire from the Nursery class to Year 6 or the order in which both should be taught. As a result, pupils do not achieve well in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum plans in these subjects clearly set out the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils must learn. Subject leaders should monitor these subjects more closely to ensure that staff are teaching these areas of the curriculum effectively. This will help pupils to know and remember more.
- Some pupils have found it difficult to regulate their behaviour since returning to school after the pandemic. To support these pupils, leaders have very recently revised the behaviour management policy and retrained staff. Leaders need to ensure that staff consistently follow this new behaviour management policy. This will help to improve pupils' behaviour and eradicate low-level disruption in class.
- There are a number of pupils who do not come to school on a regular basis. Others are not punctual. Leaders need to think of more innovative ways of encouraging pupils to come to school and arrive on time. This is so that attendance and punctuality do not impede pupils' learning and development.
- Many of the governors are new to their roles and do not have a secure understanding of what the school does well and what needs to improve. As a result, they do not have the knowledge or skills to support and challenge senior leaders effectively. Leaders need to ensure that new governors receive training to enable them to contribute fully to the work of the governing body. This will ensure that all governors are offering the highest level of support and challenge to senior leaders for all aspects of the school's work.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 school 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	136056
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10200835
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jackie Grannell
Headteacher	Michelle Holford
Website	www.millfieldsceprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new senior leadership team and a significant number of new teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school's last SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) was completed in March 2018.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with two governors and with two representatives from the local authority.

- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese of Chester.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding and governors' minutes. Inspectors also spoke to staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, in the dining hall and in the outdoor play areas. They also spoke with staff about their well-being and workload.
- Inspectors talked with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and to the online staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into early reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons and spoke with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils' reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders and pupils about some other subjects.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Rennie

Ofsted Inspector

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