

Inspection of a good school: Millfield Primary School

Grange Lane, Littleport, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 1HW

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

Outcome

Millfield Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Wendy Lee. This school is part of The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Hugh Greenway, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tim Coulson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Millfield love their school. They say it is like a family. Pupils are polite and courteous. Staff encourage pupils to be brave and try hard. Pupils learn to build on their strengths and persist in overcoming challenges. They value and respond positively to feedback.

Pupils enjoy an ambitious and exciting curriculum. This begins in the early years, where children get off to a good start by developing their confidence and interests. As pupils progress, they build on these strong foundations. Pupils have opportunities to practise and apply their knowledge in different ways. A range of memorable trips and visitors brings learning to life. These activities deepen pupils' understanding of the curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils behave well. They show kindness and respect for one another. They talk about different kinds of behaviours and how to stay safe. Older pupils reflect on and discuss the impact of the school's values on their own personal development. These values include to try hard, join in and play fair. Pupils talk about how they have overcome personal challenges or loss. They value the support of their peers and the staff at the school.

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

The school has recently revised the curriculum. It is well sequenced and ensures that pupils' knowledge builds over time. As a result, pupils progress well from their different starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. The school ensures that pupils with SEND take part in all aspects of school life by making appropriate adaptations.

The school has robustly reviewed the implementation and impact of the curriculum in the core subjects. Staff have agreed the most effective methods and approaches to deliver these subjects. Strategies such as 'tick it or fix it' encourage pupils to identify and learn from their mistakes. However, teachers are still getting to grips with how to best deliver the curriculum in some subjects. Leaders do not always check the agreed approaches used by teachers. This means teaching is sometimes inconsistent. Pupils do not learn as much as they could.

As soon as children start school, they learn to share books and stories. In the Reception class, children quickly learn important reading lesson routines. Pupils who fall behind with reading receive effective extra support and time to practise. This helps to build their confidence. Reading for pleasure is a priority. The weekly book club provides opportunities for pupils to talk about different kinds of books. Pupils enjoy reading. Recommended reads and collections of interesting books and poetry inspire pupils to broaden their reading diet.

Leaders use frequent checks to identify curriculum strengths and any development areas. They act upon these findings. For example, they recently identified that some pupils' writing needed to improve. Changes were made that included a focus on grammar and sentence structure. Outcomes in writing are improving as a result.

Children in the early years settle quickly. Staff skilfully support and develop children's communication and language skills. They respond to children's interests. For example, inspired by a virtual visit, children turned their classroom into a museum. They created displays, maps, labelled bones and wrote information leaflets. Staff ensure that the learning environment gives children valuable learning opportunities. Children enjoy being scientists, historians and archaeologists.

There are many opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons, including working with the Royal Opera House, contributing to art gallery displays and learning from local authors. Pupils take on meaningful roles and responsibilities, such as being school councillors. Their opinions and suggestions are valued and acted upon. They help to make the school better. Pupils learn how to make friends, keep safe and lead healthy lives.

The school has recently introduced a new behaviour policy. Staff have shared the new expectations with pupils and parents. This approach has had a positive effect. Pupils are polite and courteous. Staff encourage pupils to show respect for one another and towards adults. Behaviour in classes is positive and calm. Leaders work closely with parents. Attendance is high. Pupils love coming to school.

Teamwork and collaboration are central to how the school and trust work. The trust ensures the school has the support needed to meet the needs of pupils. Staff well-being, recruitment, retention and training are priorities. Staff share leaders' ambitions. They appreciate the opportunities for networking and collaboration that exist across the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are still getting to grips with teaching the new curriculum in some subjects. Leaders are developing ways of checking what is happening in classrooms. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning experiences varies and, in these subjects, some pupils do not learn as much as they could. Leaders should agree a way of checking how the curriculum is delivered and continue to train teachers in how to teach all subjects effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142498
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10295083
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tim Coulson
Headteacher	Wendy Lee
Website	www.millfieldprimaryschool.co.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust.
- The school operates a nursery.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club run by the school.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with school leaders, the chief executive officer, the regional director, and the SEND and governance director.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult. The inspector also looked at pupils work and discussed the curriculum in other subjects with leaders.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that keeps pupils safe.
- The inspector considered the 74 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, including the 65 free-text responses. The lead inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for school staff. The views of pupils were gathered during the inspection.

Inspection team

Oriana Dalton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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