

# Inspection of Millfields Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Willington Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 9EB

---

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 March 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

---

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Pupils enjoy belonging to the Millfields' family. They said that this helps them to feel cared for and happy. Pupils live by the school's values. They champion each other to make sure that everyone is welcome in their school.

Pupils said that they enjoy their lessons. Typically, they behave well in class. Pupils told inspectors that the changes to the school's approach to their behaviour mean that they feel safe and well supported. They said that they particularly benefit from the 'reset' part of the behaviour approach.

The school has raised its expectations of what pupils can achieve. Children in the early years are well prepared for Year 1. Older pupils are beginning to benefit from the school's well-designed curriculum. However, some teachers do not deliver the curriculum well enough to ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve as well as they should.

Pupils relish the variety of opportunities that are on offer to them. They are enthusiastic about the charitable work in which they participate, as it helps them to learn how to be responsible citizens. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles, especially those with the role of well-being ambassador. In this role, pupils check and support other pupils' mental health and happiness.

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

The school has successfully prioritised the teaching of reading. Children in the early years, including those in the pre-school class, enjoy listening to a range of songs and rhymes. From the Reception Year, children benefit from a carefully constructed phonics programme that is delivered by well-trained staff. Staff ably support pupils who need extra help to learn phonics. Most pupils read fluently by the end of key stage 1.

Older pupils are immersed in a range of interesting and culturally diverse texts. This helps them to develop a love of reading. Pupils were particularly keen to share that, through reading books, their imaginations take them to far-off places. The school's recently created library provides pupils with a relaxing space to enjoy a book.

The school has carefully organised the curriculum so that it is aspirational and ambitious. Across most subjects, it is clear what pupils should know and when they should learn subject content. Trips and visitors to school are interwoven into the curriculum to enrich pupils' learning. However, the school has not ensured that teachers have the expertise to design lesson activities that support pupils to know and remember more over time. This means that some pupils find it difficult to build on prior learning. Added to this, some staff do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This means that some pupils are not ready for their next stage of education.

Recently, the provision in the early years has improved considerably. The curriculum has been designed effectively. Staff's strong expertise in early years helps them to implement this curriculum successfully. Staff know children and their families well. Parents and carers are supported to be actively involved in their children's learning. Children make a strong start to their education.

The school has introduced a nurture hub, where pupils benefit from carefully designed support. The school has appropriate processes in place to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Pupils with SEND typically access the same curriculum as their peers. However, the school does not identify consistently well the small steps that these pupils need to take in their learning. This hinders how well some pupils with SEND master what they most need to know before moving on to new learning. Consequently, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

In the early years, children settle into the school day quickly. They form secure relationships with adults and with their friends. Pupils in key stage 1 build on this positive start. On the rare occasions that pupils forget to follow school rules, staff quickly and caringly remind them of the expectations. Through carefully designed learning opportunities, staff give pupils the tools that they need to express how they feel.

Attendance is a priority. Pupils understand the importance of attending school each day. The school works closely with parents to improve pupils' attendance. Nevertheless, the absence rates for some groups of pupils remain high. These pupils miss out on learning opportunities, which hampers their chances of success.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn to become responsible young people. They value diversity and they celebrate the many differences between people. Older pupils told inspectors that they learned about being respectful and showing empathy by taking part in a recent mental health project.

Governors have had recent training to improve their understanding of their roles. However, it is too early to see the impact of this support. Governors do not evaluate the school's actions well enough. This means that they do not challenge the school as effectively as they should.

Staff feel valued. They said that the recent changes to the school's behaviour approach mean that they can focus on teaching and learning. This, in turn, is having a positive impact on their mental health and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In several subjects, staff lack the expertise to design learning that enables pupils to build on their prior knowledge. This means that pupils do not remember their learning over time in these subjects. The school should ensure that its ambitious curriculum is well delivered by staff.
- Some staff do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. This limits pupils' progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff raise their aspirations for what pupils can accomplish in their learning.
- The school does not identify the small steps of progress in the curriculum that pupils with SEND should make. This means that some pupils with SEND do not secure basic foundational knowledge before moving on to new learning. Consequently, these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff provide the support that is needed to help pupils with SEND to be successful.
- The school does not ensure that some groups of pupils attend school regularly enough. As a result, these pupils miss out on important learning. The school should address the barriers to attendance that some pupils have so that pupils with low attendance attend school more often.
- Governors do not evaluate the school's actions well enough. As a result, governors are not able to support the school sufficiently well to bring about improvement. Governors should use the expertise gained from recent training to provide appropriate challenge to the school.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136056
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	10314035
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jackie Grannell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michelle Holford
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.millfieldsceprimary.co.uk">www.millfieldsceprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 November and 1 December 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Chester. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place before July 2025.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English including early reading, mathematics and history. They met with subject leaders and with teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They met with leaders, spoke with pupils and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with representatives of the diocese and of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils for inspectors to consider.

### **Inspection team**

Helen Friend, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Hulse

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024