

Milton CofE VC Primary School

Humphries Way, Milton, Cambridge, CB24 6DL

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement across the school is good. Pupils make particularly rapid progress in Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average in reading and mathematics, and improving quickly in writing.
- As a result of action taken by the leadership team, the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language has improved this year and is now good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress as a result of consistently good teaching, and as a result they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective in supporting pupils in their learning.
- Most teachers plan interesting lessons that enable different ability groups to make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have a positive attitude towards learning and are responsive to the expectations of teachers.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The pupils are polite and courteous towards one another and adults.
- The school is a safe environment. Pupils say they feel safe at school, a view supported by almost all parents who expressed a view.
- Governors have a determination to make the school outstanding. They have a good understanding of the daily work of the school, they monitor standards rigorously and contribute well to improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers have the same high expectations or pay sufficient attention to the way in which pupils present their work, so the quality varies across the school. In some classes teachers are not ensuring that pupils write neatly.
- Higher ability pupils are not given enough opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills. The activities provided do not encourage them to study topics in more depth.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and gained other evidence on the quality of teaching by looking at the work in pupils’ books and talking to them about their work. Senior leaders jointly observed five of these lessons with the inspectors. Together with the headteacher, inspectors looked through books from the previous year. They also listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, the literacy and numeracy leaders, six members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, attended two assemblies, and looked at a range of documentation, including: the school’s view of its own performance and development plan; policies and information about pupils’ performance, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching; safeguarding information; and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors considered the questionnaire returns from 38 members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of 149 responses by parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to several parents informally.

Inspection team

Caroline Parry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sarah Warboys

Additional Inspector

Mark Redmile

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is considerably larger than most primary schools.
- The large majority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is increasing.
- Few pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who are supported at school action, school action plus or through a statement of special education needs are all below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of their pupils' achievement
 - consistently providing activities that encourage more-able pupils to think more deeply so they can study topics in more detail
 - making sure that pupils in all classes take pride in the presentation of their work
 - encouraging good handwriting so that all pupils write legibly.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She is aware of the strengths of the school and is clear about future priorities. The introduction of a more thorough and rigorous method of tracking pupils' progress has resulted in the school being able to quickly identify pupils who are falling behind and provide them with the individual support they need. As a result, attainment is above average and those who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs are now making good progress.
- The headteacher has encouraged subject leaders to develop their role further by taking greater responsibility for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Staff have welcomed the increased responsibility. The impact of this is seen in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, where the gap between their attainment and that of their classmates is reducing, especially in mathematics. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well.
- The introduction of a new approach to teaching writing is starting to raise attainment, and the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2 increased in 2014. The progress of pupils is carefully monitored by the literacy leader, and the school's data show that all pupils who have received support made better progress with their writing as a result of the help they received.
- The performance of staff is managed well, and pay rises and promotion are linked appropriately to pupils' performance.
- The primary school sports fund has been used to increase the sporting opportunities for pupils through better trained teachers, a sports coach who provides lunch time and after-school activities and the opportunity to take part in inter-school competitions as well as sporting festivals.
- The pupil premium has been used effectively to provide extra support to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress and have full access to the curriculum.
- The school offers a rich and wide range of subject topics that enthuse the pupils and promote their desire to learn. Music and French are taught by specialist teachers, and pupils are given the opportunity to explore the work of different artists as well as take part in specialist subject days such as science and art days. Specialist careers events have been held and the school has links with Cambridge University.
- Pupils learn about different cultures and faiths and regularly lead assemblies. During the inspection the inspectors saw an assembly led by Year 6 in celebration of their recent residential trip to Grafham Water. The themes were developing a 'growth' mindset and teamwork. Pupils also take part in the local community. For example, the school council held a ballot for the local council on how to improve the village, and presented their ideas at a council meeting.
- The subjects taught are enhanced by a wide range of additional activities such as a gardening club, the opportunity to play an instrument and sports clubs. The school also provides a variety of trips and visits to widen pupils' social, moral, spiritual, cultural and learning experiences. These are appreciated by both parents and pupils.
- The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Senior leaders and governors are aware that they still have work to do before leadership and management are outstanding. They know that there are some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations and not all groups of pupils excel yet.
- The local authority has provided light support by helping the school in reviewing its performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly committed to the school, and to its vision and ethos. The governors are determined to make the school outstanding and, as part of this drive, they hold all leaders fully to

account. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and actively take part in evaluating its work as well as helping to write the school development plan. As part of their monitoring work they carry out classroom visits and talk to pupils and staff, making them more knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and how pupils are performing.

- Governors understand what data tells them about pupils' performance. They talk knowledgeably about how the pupil premium and sports funding is spent and the impact it is having on pupils' achievement. They set robust targets for the headteacher's performance and hold her to account for ensuring that staff pay is linked to pupils' performance.
- The governors are diligent in carrying out their safeguarding duties, ensuring that the school is a safe place for pupils and staff. They review policies annually and checks all risk assessments and accident logs. They are rigorous in their oversight of the school budget.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils are polite and show respect for one another and adults. Pupils walk around the corridor quietly and in an orderly manner. They show consideration by holding the door open for one another and adults, and also when playing together. Pupils told the inspectors that teachers teach them the rules and explain why they are important.
- Potentially vulnerable pupils, including those with a disability or special educational needs, are accepted by everyone and included in all activities. In this way the school tackles discrimination and promotes equal opportunities.
- In lessons, pupils show an eagerness to learn. They settle quickly at the start and respond to their teachers' requests. However, in the few lessons where they were given activities that were either uninteresting or too easy some pupils were distracted from their learning and inclined to distract their partner.
- Pupils enjoy talking about their work, and when looking at exercise books inspectors found that most pupils took a pride in their work. However, a few did not take care with the presentation of their work, which was untidy and difficult to read.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school, and although there is some bullying they have confidence in teachers sorting it out. The pupils told inspectors that teachers talk to all pupils involved in order to settle the matter. They are taught how to keep safe when using the internet and about the dangers of cyber bullying. Most parents who expressed a view feel their child is safe and well looked after, and that the school deals effectively with any bullying.
- Pupils' attendance dropped to just below average in 2013. The school has taken effective action in order to improve attendance and it is currently just above average.
- Pupils have the opportunity to get involved with leadership activities. For example, they can be a member of the school council, and those in Years 5 and 6 can train to be play pals. Pupils raise money for charity and grow food in the garden for the local community.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have a good knowledge of what their pupils can do and what interests them, and they use it to plan lessons that are interesting and engaging and build upon pupils' previous learning. Teachers provide the pupils with constant feedback on the quality of their work and help on how they can improve it during the lesson.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of groups of pupils within the classroom. This is because teachers share their planning with them, they have good subject knowledge and they adapt activities so that pupils who have special educational needs or speak English as an additional language make good progress.

- Reading is taught well. Pupils enjoy reading and do so fluently, and are able to use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words in sentences. Younger pupils are encouraged to think about books and the characters in them. In a Year 1 class pupils were role-playing the emotions of the characters in a book and were asked to think about what might happen next.
- Books are marked regularly and teachers set clear targets that let pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Most teachers set high expectations and expect pupils to always present their work neatly in their best handwriting. However, some are inconsistent in their expectations, especially for handwriting and presentation. The inspectors saw examples of 'scruffy' handwriting and poor presentation in the books in some classes.
- In some instances more-able pupils are not given work that is hard or challenging enough. A few pupils told the inspectors that they found work to be too easy at times as they did not have to think about it.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The knowledge and skills of children when they enter the Reception Year vary from year to year from below to above average. In 2013 a large proportion of children entered reception with development below expectations for their age. However, as a result of accurate assessment and good teaching they made good progress and entered Year 1 with a good level of development. Children quickly develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. The effective teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) has resulted in above-average proportions of pupils reaching the threshold in the national check of how well phonics is understood. Performance in the Year 2 national tests has been above average in mathematics and writing and well above in reading.
- At the end of Year 6 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the 2013 national tests is above average in reading and mathematics, and the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 is well above average. However, in writing attainment has been below average. As a result of the new approach to writing the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing has improved and is now closer to average. The school data for this year show that it is continuing to improve, as verified by the higher levels of writing seen in pupils' exercise books.
- While the more-able pupils attain above the levels expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2, they are not always given demanding enough work in order for them to exceed expected progress. The exception to this is in mathematics, where pupils are given the opportunity to take Level 6 tests, and standards are typically above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to that of their classmates. This is due to the effective support they receive within the classroom. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are making good progress and achieve well.
- The additional pupil premium funding is used wisely to promote good progress. In 2014 the attainment gap between these pupils and their classmates was just under five terms in reading and writing and less than a term in mathematics. These standards were just above provisional figures for all pupils nationally in mathematics and just below in reading and writing.

The early years provision is good

- Teachers and other adults organise a wide variety of interesting and engaging activities that help children to develop their skills. As a result all children make at least expected progress and any who fall behind in

their learning catch up quickly.

- Children who speak English as an additional language catch up quickly in English because adults act as good role models when speaking the language. The targeted support they receive in class is also highly effective.
- The quality of teaching is good. Planned activities are designed to cater for children of all abilities. The learning environment is positive and adults interact well with the children. They ask questions to check the children's understanding and suggest what they might try next in order to develop their learning. By the end of the year children are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Teachers have high expectation of children's behaviour. They actively teach how to behave appropriately and the children respond to their guidance. Children behave well because they are keen, interested and motivated to take part in the activities adults provide. They work well together and are polite to one another. For example, an inspector observed one child saying to another 'Excuse me, could we swap?'
- Leaders and managers ensure that parents are supported when their child starts Reception, and the parents spoken to all agreed that they are well informed. Teaching is monitored frequently and staff receive appropriate training in order to develop their skills. The school supports children in the move from Reception into Year 1 by including some of daily activities they have been used to in their daily routine for the first few weeks of term. This helps them to adjust to the more formal teaching approach used in Key Stage 1.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110792
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	448658

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Lee
Headteacher	Anna Reeder
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2010
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