

Inspection of Milton Church of England Primary School

Humphries Way, Milton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB24 6DL

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Milton Primary School pupils are polite and respectful. These characteristics are part of the expectations set out in 'Milton manners' about how pupils treat each other. Weekly assemblies remind pupils to be reflective and considerate towards each other. During the inspection, the key message to pupils was to 'be kind, nice and smile at people. Think about how we can make a difference'. Pupils say this is an inclusive school where everyone is treated equally.

Pupils told us that they feel safe at the school. They enjoy coming to school and seeing their friends. Pupils say that bullying does not happen often at this school. If any incidents occur, pupils are confident that adults will deal with them quickly.

Pupils respond well to school routines and high expectations for behaviour. This includes children in early years. Pupils follow instructions willingly and enjoy their learning.

Pupils enjoy studying the wide range of subjects. However, leaders do not regularly check the quality of education in all areas of the curriculum. It is not clear how well pupils are learning in all subjects. Pupils are not always remembering the important knowledge they need to know before they move on in their learning.

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

Leaders ensure that there are logical plans in place for each subject. The chosen schemes provide a structure for staff to support their planning. Content is based on pupils building upon previously learned knowledge. For example, teachers introduce the Romans in Year 2. Pupils revisit and learn more about Romans in Year 4. This helps pupils build on what they know and deepen their understanding of concepts such as 'empire' and 'civilisations'.

Leaders do not have a secure oversight of the quality of education. Teachers do not consistently use assessment effectively. Occasionally, teachers do not change their plans to meet pupils' needs. This results in pupils either having gaps in their knowledge or the work not being challenging enough for some pupils. Trust leaders have firm plans in place for supporting school leaders in monitoring the quality of education.

The curriculum in the early years is well thought through. Leaders ensure that children in Reception get off to a good start. Staff choose appropriate activities to support children's learning. For example, children develop their communication effectively through role-play activities. Assessment in the early years is stronger. Staff know what children should know at each stage in the different areas of learning. Adults adapt their plans quickly to make sure that children are on track with their learning.

Pupils follow a well-sequenced phonics programme. Teachers ensure that pupils take books home that match the sounds they are learning. This allows pupils to practise the sounds they know and use them in different contexts. Weaker readers use their phonics knowledge effectively to help them read unfamiliar words. This is helping them become more fluent and catch up with their peers over time.

The positive relationships between pupils and adults help to create a calm environment. Teachers help pupils make the right choices about how to behave. Pupils can access a wide range of clubs. These allow pupils to develop different interests. For example, leaders introduced boccia to help broaden pupils' understanding of disability.

There are effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with more complex needs get the additional support they need. Teachers do not always use the information from the pupil 'passports' to adapt their teaching plans effectively. This means that pupils with SEND are not always accessing the curriculum as well as they could.

Most staff members say that leaders support them well and that they enjoy working at Milton Primary School.

Governors have not ensured that leaders are following the agreed procedures to safeguard pupils. Governors do not challenge school leaders enough about the quality of education. They know about the school's intentions and projects such as those used to develop pupils' vocabulary. However, governors do not question leaders specifically about how well the curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils. Governors do not effectively hold leaders to account for the quality of education.

Leaders and teachers value the support offered by trust leaders. This has been particularly effective in supporting leaders with the curriculum. Leaders describe the curriculum support from the trust as 'really helpful'. Subject leaders speak highly of the subject forums across the trust. These forums help to increase staff's knowledge and enable them to share ideas with each other.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There are significant weaknesses in leaders' following of the safeguarding arrangements. Leaders rely too much on their knowledge of families. Too frequently, leaders check through informal conversations and do not always record information. This results in some actions not being taken swiftly enough. Leaders do not always share important information with the relevant people. Leaders do not always have a full picture of what is happening to safeguard pupils.

Pupils learn about a range of risks such as cyber-bullying and water safety through the curriculum. Pupils can post any concerns they have in a 'worry box' and feel confident to speak to staff when they are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is too much reliance on leaders knowing pupils and families well. Leaders' safeguarding recording is weak. There is a lack of rigour and no systematic approach with regards to the handling of safeguarding concerns. When decisions are made about concerns, leaders do not always record their reasons for actions taken and how these are followed up. Leaders do not always ensure that pupils get the support they need from external agencies quickly enough. Leaders need to urgently ensure that their safeguarding systems and processes are robust. This is to ensure they are assured that pupils are safeguarded well and receive the support they need. Furthermore, those responsible for governance need to check that leaders carry out their safeguarding duties effectively.
- Leaders do not monitor the overall quality of education well enough. There are inconsistencies in how well assessment is used across the school. Consequently, pupils are not always remembering and knowing more of the intended curriculum in all subjects. Leaders need further support and training to help them effectively monitor how well pupils are achieving in their leadership areas of responsibility. This will help to ensure that all pupils receive a high quality of education.
- Governors have not challenged leaders sufficiently on how well the curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils. This has resulted in leaders not being held to account for the quality of education at the school. Governors need to check what leaders are doing to ensure the chosen curriculum is delivered effectively to meet the needs of pupils. Governors should ensure they develop the skills to effectively hold leaders to account for the quality of education.
- Leaders do not ensure that staff effectively use the information they have to support pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils with SEND struggle to access the curriculum. Leaders need to provide staff with training on how to adapt planning to ensure all pupils with SEND can effectively access the curriculum.

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	143776
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10200454
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	347
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Maxwell
Headteacher	Anna Reeder
Website	www.milton.cambs.sch.uk/website
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Milton Church of England (VC) Primary School converted to become an academy in June 2017 and is a part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary controlled school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was on 26 September 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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 held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the early years leader, members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors, and trust leaders, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, geography, history, physical education, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The lead inspector carried out a scrutiny of the single central record and other safeguarding records. The lead inspector also spoke to the school's safeguarding team and the trust's director of inclusive leadership.
- Inspectors observed school assemblies. They also spoke to pupils and parents.
- Inspectors considered 90 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 62 free-text parent comments. The lead inspector held a telephone call with a parent. Inspectors also reviewed the 30 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Maureen Su, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Stevens	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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