

Inspection of Milton Church of England Primary School

Humphries Way, Milton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB24 6DL

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The headteacher of this school is Damien Homden. This school is part of The Diocese of Ely Multi-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, Adrian Ball, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Jackson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate how teachers ensure lessons are informative and enjoyable. They like their teachers and the staff who support them. Pupils typically use words like 'amazing' and 'fascinating' to describe their learning. They especially enjoy studying texts by Dickens and Shakespeare. Pupils talk animatedly about science, art and physical education lessons. They also like the chance to revisit what they have learned so they remember it.

Pupils show their 'Milton Manners' and follow the school rules. They like the '123 Magic' approach to ensuring they make good behaviour choices. Pupils are motivated by collecting points for a whole-class reward. They trust that adults will help them if they have any worries. Pupils feel safe.

There is a range of clubs in which pupils can participate, including chess, gymnastics, choir and dance. Football for boys and girls is popular, with support from Cambridge United coaches in lessons. Pupils look forward to residential and various school trips, such as to learn more about the Anglo-Saxons or to visit London.

Pupils take on roles as members of the school or eco-council. They look forward to being play leaders. Older pupils enjoy reading to the younger children. They also take part in community projects.

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

The changes in the school are having a positive impact. Leaders have successfully addressed the concerns raised at the last inspection. The school recognises that parents are still keen to know more about how their children are achieving and being supported.

The curriculum is ambitious and has been carefully designed. The priority given to reading enables pupils to successfully access the wider curriculum. In all subjects, the school has mapped out in detail what needs to be taught and when. This enables pupils to successfully make links with prior learning and connect learning across topics. They can articulate and remember knowledge well. Staff are also knowledgeable. Teachers are aware of common misconceptions and check pupils understanding at the end of a unit of work. However, there are some occasions when gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified or addressed quickly enough.

Pupils have access to a rich range of literature. This gives pupils an extensive vocabulary and appreciation of history and culture. Younger pupils quickly learn to recognise the sounds they need to know to read fluently. The few who may find reading tricky are skilfully supported to catch up. This is because books and interventions are well matched to their reading needs. As a result, pupils achieve well in reading.

Staff make successful adaptations to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum. The school acts upon advice from external agencies to support the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that all pupils with SEND have learning targets that are regularly reviewed. However, for a few pupils with SEND, these targets are not broken down into small enough steps. This means that a few pupils with SEND do not receive the precise support they need.

Early years is a strength of the school. Children make a positive start to school life. Leaders think carefully about how to ensure activities are enhanced to deepen children's understanding. Activities chosen are meaningful and engaging. Children listen and concentrate well for their age, as expectations from staff are clear. Staff ensure that children are suitably prepared for Year 1.

Pupils are polite and courteous to adults. Overall, they play and learn cooperatively. There can be some chatter in classes, but teachers address this appropriately. Pupils know the consequences of their actions should they make a wrong choice and feel that these are managed fairly. For some pupils with more complex needs, staff support them to regulate their emotions with care and patience. However, staff would appreciate more specific training to give them more confidence in implementing this.

There is an effective personal development curriculum in place. Pupils have a mature appreciation of equality and diversity, as well as discrimination, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain. They are taught how to respect different beliefs and lifestyle choices. They are open minded and accommodating of each other. Where this is not the case, pupils are unafraid to call it out. They know how to stay safe online. Older pupils have age-appropriate lessons on relationships and sex education, so they are prepared for teenage life.

There is a loyal and dedicated staff team. Staff feel that they can approach leaders to share their views.

The trust provides effective support to governors and leaders. Governors have the skills and knowledge to undertake their role and are now holding leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some instances, pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not always addressed quickly enough. This limits pupils from acquiring the depth of understanding leaders intend. Staff need to check pupils' understanding within

lessons more effectively and in a timely manner so that gaps are filled as quickly as possible.

- For a few pupils with SEND, targets set are not always precise enough or broken down into small enough steps. This means that some learning opportunities for these few pupils are not always maximised. Leaders need to support staff to have the specific skills and knowledge to set and deliver precise learning goals for these pupils. Leaders then need to ensure that these targets are reviewed more frequently and that parents are kept regularly updated.
- Some parents do not feel that they are kept fully informed as to how their children are achieving at school. This can cause concern for some parents. Leaders, including governors, recognise this and need to strengthen communication systems with parents to ensure an effective working partnership between home and 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

Unique reference number	143776
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10313373
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	311
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Jackson
Headteacher	Damien Homden
Website	milton.demat.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.
- This is a voluntary controlled Church of England School. It had its last section 48 inspection in September 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due within eight years of the previous one.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The new headteacher was appointed in May 2022.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- 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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also met leaders from the trust and school improvement team, including the trust's director of education and the hub director.
- The lead inspector met the newly appointed chair of the local governing board and also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, art and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with teachers and support staff. The lead inspector also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation, school improvement plan and governor minutes.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which included 58 free-text comments. The inspectors also talked to parents at the gate and read two emails received from parents. There were no responses to the staff survey. No pupils answered the pupil survey. However, the inspectors spoke to several pupils from different year groups during the inspection, as well as a range of staff.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ceri Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Gammons	Ofsted Inspector

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