

Milton Mount Primary School

Grattons Drive, Pound Hill, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 3AG

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders' perseverance has established high expectations for what pupils can and should achieve. This has brought about notable improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes, particularly over the last year.
- Staff demonstrate a shared understanding of effective teaching and learning at their school. They plan work that challenges pupils appropriately over time. Pupils respond well to this consistent approach, making much better progress than they did in the past.
- Teachers keep a careful eye on how well pupils are doing, using valid assessments to inform their views. They take prompt action where needed, both to support or challenge individual pupils and to address wider issues, such as in the accuracy of spelling.
- Leaders actively develop teachers' expertise across the school, sharing and building on existing strengths. Middle leaders play their part in checking standards and helping colleagues to improve. This helps to smooth out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, if and when they occur.
- Attainment is rising because pupils now make good progress. However, Year 6 pupils have yet to catch up from the legacy of weaker teaching that they experienced in the past.
- Vulnerable pupils' learning is supported well. Leaders' recent refinement of how additional funding is used is proving effective. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are catching up with other pupils nationally. This remains an ongoing focus.
- Pupils enjoy a rich wider curriculum that stimulates their interest and deepens their understanding of the world. Leaders make creative use of resources and the local environment to enable this successfully.
- The school is a highly nurturing environment. Staff take a genuine interest in the pupils in their care. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and effective.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. The vast majority attend regularly and arrive on time. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school, interacting considerably with others.
- Children's experience in the early years is highly positive. They settle quickly, are well cared for and progress successfully with their learning. Effective leadership is strengthening the quality of provision over time.
- Governors are committed to the school. They are suitably informed and experienced in their role. Their support of and challenge to leaders supports school improvement effectively.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that recent changes to the use of additional funding continue to diminish the differences in attainment for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, compared with other pupils nationally.
- Secure persistently strong progress over time for pupils from their starting points, by ensuring that:
 - pupils spell familiar words with consistent accuracy
 - the most able pupils consider their audience more deeply when structuring their writing
 - pupils develop their confidence and resilience, so that they are less reliant on support from adults and can move on quickly with their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The senior leadership team's collective determination has successfully raised standards in the school since the last inspection. The two new deputy headteachers share the headteacher's clear vision and support her effectively in realising it. The close collaboration and tenacity of the 'headship team' have led to measurable improvements in the quality of teaching and, consequently, pupils' learning and progress.
- Staff describe proudly the improvements in the school since the last inspection. They share leaders' ambitious vision for the school and are committed to realising it. They are supported well through opportunities to work closely together, and learn from colleagues beyond the school, such as through visits to other local schools. This has led successfully to them establishing a consistently effective approach to teaching across the school, despite many staff leaving and joining in the two years since the last inspection.
- Despite the growing strengths in the school, staff are not complacent. They know that pupils could make even better progress, and that some still have some catching up to do, so that they achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6. Some improvements, such as to progress in writing by the end of key stage 2, were not sustained from 2017 to 2018. Improvements since the last inspection have been slower to 'bear fruit' than staff would have liked.
- Leaders ensure that pupils experience a rich and stimulating curriculum. They make effective use of staff members' specific expertise to enhance pupils' experiences of, for example, music and modern foreign languages. Pupils enjoy their learning across a range of subjects, which is enhanced by teachers' thoughtful use of the school's facilities and grounds, such as through 'forest school'.
- Beyond their formal learning, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. A clear and recognised focus on rights and respect encourages pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The success of this approach is evident in pupils' considerate interactions and in their thoughtful consideration of topics in assemblies and displays around the school.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding carefully to support disadvantaged pupils. They are not afraid to adapt their approach when needed, to improve the impact of their work, and have refocused their efforts in recent times. Consequently, the progress and attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are closing, although not consistently. In some years and subjects, disadvantaged pupils make better progress and attain at least as well as others in the school.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has strengthened over the past year. Leaders understand pupils' different needs very well and cater for them in a highly nurturing way. Senior leaders keep a careful check on the progress that pupils make, to be sure that the extra help that they receive makes enough of a difference to their learning as well as their welfare.
- Sports premium funding is used well. Staff benefit from working alongside a coach to develop their expertise in delivering high-quality physical education (PE) provision.

Pupils' access to and participation in extra-curricular sporting activities, within and beyond the school, have increased over time. At this early stage in the term, routines for lunchtime games and activities were not fully established. However, older pupils talked enthusiastically about the equipment that they can use and the opportunities that they get to lead sporting activities for younger pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors share leaders' determination to raise standards in the school. They are an established and dedicated group whose collective experience prepares them appropriately for their role. They are sensibly creative in supplementing their work with helpful advice from experts beyond the school.
- The governing body understands the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They reflect accurately on aspects of their own work that could be strengthened further, such as their understanding and use of performance information. The rigour of their work and the extent of their challenge to leaders around standards in the school is evident from the records of their meetings and visits to the school.
- Governors understand and meet their duties in relation to pupils' welfare, and specifically safeguarding. They make helpful checks to test out how policies are working in practice. They are aware of recent changes to legislation that leaders have addressed, although they did not describe them with clarity during the inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Most pupils and parents reflect care and welfare as real strengths of the school. Almost all pupils say that they feel safe in school and are supported well by the adults around them. Parents have similar views, describing how they value the way that staff take time to get to know their children.
- Staff are vigilant and trained well to carry out their safeguarding duties. They promote an environment where pupils learn how to manage risks successfully, and they know when it is important to seek additional support. This helps pupils to make sensible decisions that promote their own welfare and that of others.
- Leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding work is supported effectively by the systems and structures that are in place. Staff keep careful records of any concerns they may have about a pupil. Leaders take prompt action to follow them up in an appropriate way. Their diligent work with experts from beyond the school provides pupils and families with useful and effective support where needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the last inspection, leaders have successfully renewed the school's approach to teaching and learning, tackling the areas identified for improvement. Teachers subscribe consistently to this vision. This supports them in planning lessons that develop pupils' learning securely over time, particularly in English and mathematics.

- Teachers monitor pupils' learning carefully. They use valid assessment methods as a matter of routine to check pupils' knowledge and identify gaps in their learning. Consequently, teachers know which pupils need extra help and those whose understanding is secure. This enables teachers to provide extra help in a timely way and to move pupils on promptly to their next steps in learning when they are ready.
- In class, pupils respond well to teachers' clear and high expectations. Despite the early stage in the term, learning routines were clearly established. Pupils expect to work hard, and they tackle tasks in class with a sense of purpose. Learning time is rarely wasted. Pupils work well together, supporting each other successfully with their learning.
- Leaders' current emphasis on non-negotiables is helping pupils to focus on the standards of their work. Pupils are increasingly aware of the quality of their writing, reviewing it routinely to check for and address basic errors, such as in spellings. This work is in the relatively early stages but is helping pupils to reflect actively on how they use their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills to produce writing of a suitably high standard. This, in turn, is supporting improvements to the quality of their writing.
- Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and check out what they know. In the most skilful of instances, they use their secure subject knowledge effectively to probe and deepen pupils' understanding of the concepts they are studying. This reinforces and develops pupils' learning successfully over time.
- Adults understand vulnerable pupils' specific needs well. This enables them to support pupils effectively in the classroom so that they engage successfully in learning activities. At times, pupils can be overly reliant on this nurture, which impedes their academic resilience.
- Pupils enjoy the stimulating learning opportunities that they experience across the wider curriculum, such as in French and through the forest school. Leaders recognise that in some areas of the curriculum, such as art and design technology, their planning for pupils' progression of knowledge, skills and understanding is not as clearly established as it is in other areas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **Good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Adults care for pupils very well, giving careful thought to changing routines and circumstances, to ensure that they are managed effectively. Their success in this work is evident around the school, with children settling very quickly into their new classes at the start of the year, including those who have just started in the early years foundation stage.
- Staff promote a culture of respect within the school. Themes such as tolerance and cooperation are threaded through the 'rights respecting' curriculum, assemblies and displays around the school. Pupils respond positively to the behaviours modelled by the adults around them, adopting them in their interactions with each other, staff and visitors.

- Pupils relish opportunities to take on responsibility within the school, such as by becoming a lunchtime play leader or a representative on the school council. These opportunities help them to gain confidence and develop their communication skills.
- Although pupils report that bullying sometimes occurs, the vast majority say that it is dealt with well by adults, who they are confident to talk to about any concerns that they may have. A very small number of the parents who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire expressed concerns about how successfully and promptly issues are addressed by school leaders.
- Leaders make occasional use of alternative provision to support a small number of pupils who have very specific learning or emotional needs. They consider any such placements carefully, working closely with families and relevant professionals to ensure that arrangements are suitable. Leaders put in-school options in place for other potentially vulnerable pupils, which encourage them to attend regularly and arrive on time. This helps to build pupils' confidence and increase their sense of belonging, as well as their engagement with learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The atmosphere around the school is calm and purposeful, with pupils settling quickly into their routines at the start of the academic year. Pupils understand what adults expect of them, and respond appropriately to any reminders that they may need, so that high standards are maintained.
- Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour effectively, using robust systems that help them to identify any emerging patterns. This enables them to act promptly where concerns emerge, responding appropriately to different needs and reviewing strategies to make sure that they work. As a result, pupils' behaviour rarely warrants their exclusion from school.
- Pupils attend school regularly. The proportion who are persistently absent from school is consistently below the national average. Leaders responded successfully to a slight increase in pupil absence last year, making swift contact with families to reinforce expectations and offer support where appropriate. As a result, attendance returned to above-average levels. Governors challenge leaders effectively around their work on promoting pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- Leaders keep a careful eye on pupils placed in alternative provision, to ensure that they attend regularly. Leaders ensure that clear lines of responsibility are in place, so that absence from school or an alternative placement is followed up swiftly. This helps to ensure that pupils are safe and accounted for. Pupils in alternative provision typically attend well.
- Pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime is managed well. Pupils enjoy the equipment that they have access to and appreciate how this is organised by adults and fellow pupils who are trained to take up the role of play leaders. Adults supervise lunchtimes carefully, recognising the relatively confined space for younger pupils during the early part of the academic year while routines are becoming established.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Recent improvements to the effectiveness of teaching mean pupils now make much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than in the past. Although Year 6 pupils still have some catching up to do, to make up for a legacy of historic weaker teaching, pupils in every other year group now make strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders use assessment and tracking systems successfully to identify where pupils do not achieve as well as they should, such as boys in writing and girls in mathematics. They act swiftly to address such relative weaknesses, identifying the reasons behind them and putting appropriate extra help in place. Consequently, progress is becoming more consistent across the curriculum.
- When the proportion of pupils achieving the standard of the Year 1 phonics screening check declined in 2017, leaders thoughtfully reviewed and adapted their approach to teaching phonics, to ensure it was fit for purpose. Subsequently, pupils' phonics skills are improving over time and a high proportion of pupils currently in Year 1 are on track to achieve the screening check standard. Pupils use their phonics skills well to access texts successfully.
- Pupils make good progress across key stage 1, and attainment is rising as a result. Increasing proportions of pupils are working at a greater depth of learning, particularly in Year 1. This is evident in their work, with books showing pupils using reasoning effectively in mathematics to apply their knowledge in a different context. Pupils' sustained writing shows pupils using wider vocabulary choices to bring their work to life.
- Across key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved notably over time. Pupils now make good progress by the end of Year 6 in mathematics, and their progress in reading is now broadly average. Leaders are rightly focused on improving pupils' progress in writing, and the impact of their work is evident in every year except Year 6, where pupils are still catching up after underperforming in the past.
- Leaders had identified that disadvantaged pupils were not achieving as well as they should in the past. Some of these pupils also have a special educational need which requires specific additional support. Leaders have reviewed their approach and now use pupil premium funding well to help disadvantaged pupils to catch up with their peers in school and other pupils nationally. Although a gap in progress and attainment persists for some pupils, it is closing over time. Some disadvantaged pupils make better progress than, and attain above, their peers in school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress over time, because their needs are understood and met by leaders, teachers and the other adults who support them. This prevents them from falling further behind their peers in school and nationally. There is further work to do to secure the very strong progress that is needed for them to consistently improve towards attaining in line with other pupils nationally. Leaders' determined commitment to meeting pupils' needs is tangible, and they rightly discontinue actions that do not make enough of a difference to pupils' development and progress.

- As standards rise across the school, leaders recognise the importance of ensuring that an increasing proportion reach a higher standard of learning by the end of key stage 2, particularly in writing. The most able pupils do not routinely use spellings accurately or use grammatical techniques in a way that considers their target audience carefully when writing for a specific purpose.

Early years provision

Good

- Children achieve well during their time in the early years foundation stage, because of the good quality provision that they experience. Consequently, they are prepared successfully to access their formal learning in Year 1 and beyond.
- The early years leader is knowledgeable and well informed about strengths and priorities for development in this part of the school. She focuses her team rightly on ensuring that children access stimulating and useful learning experiences across a broad curriculum. This is contributing to improving standards that are evident across the early years foundation stage. For example, boys' performance in reading and writing is improving towards that of girls in school, and remains above that of other boys nationally, because of a deliberate focus on books that stimulate their interest and activities that encourage them to practise writing.
- Children settle quickly into early years, because their induction is managed carefully. Adults work proactively with families to identify children's particular needs promptly, adapting the curriculum in response. The success of this preparation was evident during this inspection. Despite it only being their second full day in school, children engaged confidently and happily with a range of activities, playing with and alongside each other, and benefiting from adults' reassurance and encouragement. Parents value how well their children are supported during their introduction to the school.
- Safeguarding is promoted as effectively in the early years foundation stage as it is in the rest of the school. Leaders ensure that staff are suitably trained to recognise potential risks to pupils' welfare, acting on their concerns in an appropriate and proportionate way.
- Adults give careful thought to the quality of the physical learning environment in the early years area. They make effective use of inside and outside spaces to stimulate children's interests and develop aspects of their learning. They consider the learning purpose of different activities, being careful not to overstimulate the children during this early time in school. They ensure children engage with an appropriate range of experiences that help them progress successfully towards the early learning goals.
- Adults use effective systems successfully to check which aspects of children's learning are well established, and which are less well developed. They use what they learn to adapt the activities and experiences children are exposed to, so that they develop their broader knowledge, skills and understanding well over time.
- The proportion of children who achieve the early learning goals has increased steadily over time and was above the national average in 2017. Although leaders note a decline in the percentage of children achieving this measure in 2018, this represented good progress for that particular group of children, because their starting points were lower

than in previous years. A higher proportion of children exceeded the early learning goals in 2018 than was the case in previous years.

School details

Unique reference number	125916
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10053197

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	582
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lesley King
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Holmes
Telephone number	01293 537 158
Website	www.miltonmount.co.uk
Email address	office@miltonmount.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 May 2016

Information about this school

- Milton Mount Primary School is a larger-than-average maintained primary school. It has three classes in each year group except in Years R and 1, which have two classes each. A mixed Year R/1 class was introduced in September 2018.
- Less than 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a special educational need and/or disability, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is also below average.
- Most pupils are of White British origin. However, almost a quarter of pupils are believed not to speak English as their first language. Currently, there are 39 different languages spoken by pupils in the school.
- The headteacher and chair of governors were in post at the time of the last inspection. Two new deputy headteachers took up their posts in September 2016 and work closely with the headteacher as a 'headship team'. Several teachers have left or joined the

school over the past two years, although none of the class teachers are new in post this academic year.

- There is a breakfast and after-school club on the school site, which is registered and run independent of the school. The school also offers a breakfast club as part of their nurture provision for potentially vulnerable pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the senior leadership (headship) team, and with groups of middle leaders, pupils and governors. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Members of the inspection team visited 31 lessons across the school, some alongside senior leaders. They observed learning across the curriculum, reviewed books and talked to pupils about their work. In addition, they worked with school leaders to review samples of pupils' work from a range of year groups.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and visited the nurture group at breakfast and lunchtime. They also spoke to pupils and parents informally on the playground to gather their views about the school.
- The inspection team also considered wider evidence about the quality of education, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school, policies and documents on the website, records of governors' meetings and visits, and information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and achievement. They reviewed safeguarding arrangements, including the school's central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses to the Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 35 free-text responses. They also considered survey responses from 43 staff and 74 pupils.

Inspection team

Kathryn Moles, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Neil Small	Ofsted Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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