

Inspection of Milstead and Frinsted Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Milstead, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 0SJ

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 June 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The head of school is Hannah Smith. This school is part of Our Community 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 (CEO), David Whitehead, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike O'Connell. There is also an executive headteacher, Scott Guy, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Care and kindness are at the heart of this small, welcoming primary school. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff prioritise getting to know each family well. As a result, they are able to consider the needs of each pupil individually. Pupils are happy. They are exceptionally proud of their school. The newly implemented stewardship role for pupils provides opportunities for pupils to support each other, both in lessons and during playtime.

The school sets high expectations for learning and behaviour. New systems, such as 'ready, respect, safe', are used consistently by all staff. Pupils live up to these high expectations and achieve well. This starts right from the early years. Adaptations for pupils with more complex behaviour, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is carefully considered. This means that lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils feel safe and know who to talk to if they have a worry or concern.

Wider curriculum opportunities are thoughtfully planned. Visits are explicitly linked to the curriculum. For example, a trip to Kent cricket ground to reinforce learning in physical education. There are an extensive range of clubs available. Disadvantaged pupils benefit most from this offer.

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

The school has developed a broad, sequenced curriculum that is engaging for all pupils. Lessons are well resourced and adapted to ensure all pupils are able to access learning. Teachers take part in a wide variety of training to strengthen their subject knowledge. This is enhanced through support from the trust. Lesson activities help pupils to build their knowledge. Pupils remember what they are taught and make links between current and prior learning. However, the work provided does not always provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their thinking. This means that pupils do not always achieve as highly as they could. Published data does not always match the achievement of pupil's work seen in books. Small cohort numbers and the number of pupils who join the school during the year impacts this. However, the published data does not reflect the high quality of provision the pupils are receiving. Pupils make consistently strong progress through the curriculum from their starting points.

Staff understand pupils' barriers to learning. There is early identification and tailored support for all pupils, including those with SEND. Teachers routinely check pupil's understanding during lessons. They use this information to support pupils, particularly those with SEND, to access future learning. There is a carefully designed approach to pastoral support that ensures pupils are ready to learn. Independence in learning is promoted. This starts right from the early years, where the environment is designed to reinforce what children are taught. This helps them to practise key skills. Occasionally, there are missed opportunities to strengthen what is taught in the early years through high-quality adult interactions. Training is already in place to develop this.

The school has embedded the approach to reading. There is a sharp focus on learning to read. This starts as soon as children start school. Every member of staff is trained. Those pupils who find reading more difficult are expertly supported to catch up and then keep up with their peers. They read books that match the sounds they are learning and practise regularly. This helps them to become confident and fluent readers. The whole school takes part in a reading challenge and have opportunities to visit the local library. Pupils across the school talk positively about their enjoyment of reading.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They are polite and respectful. Learning is rarely disrupted. Staff are quick to reinforce the school's expectations. Pupils are treated fairly and consistently by staff. Pupils know what school staff expect from them. Attendance has improved significantly this year as a result of the school's focus and strategies to support families. A small proportion of the most disadvantaged pupils are still not attending frequently enough, despite the school's best efforts to tailor this support.

The approach to personal development is underpinned by the school's values of stewardship, inquiry, resilience and compassion. These are firmly embedded in school life and regularly referred to by staff and pupils. Pupils are proud to celebrate each other's achievements through weekly whole-school assemblies. Trips and wider experiences are woven into the curriculum and accessibility for all pupils is prioritised. Leadership opportunities for pupils are meaningful. The school council engages with the community to raise money and keep the local area clean and tidy. Pupils learn about respecting differences. The school has made deliberate text choices to ensure diversity is championed.

Workload and well-being of all staff are a high priority for leaders. Staff are positive about the support they receive, including those who are new to teaching. Trustees and governors know the school well. They maintain an effective balance of support and challenge.

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 subjects, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with opportunities to move their learning on to consider the most complex aspects of the subjects that they study. When this is the case, pupils do not deepen their understanding as well as they could, in relation to thinking like a mathematician or a geographer, for example. The school should ensure that teachers consistently design activities that enable pupils to develop the sophistication of their subject-specific thinking.

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	137483
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341692
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	56
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike O'Connell
CEO of the trust	David Whitehead
Headteacher	Hannah Smith
Executive Headteacher	Scott Guy
Website	www.milstead.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2022, under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Our Community Multi Academy Trust.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Canterbury. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in 2018 and was graded as good.
- There is a new leadership team in place since the last inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This school runs its own before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- 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 spoke to members of the local governing committee, a trustee, the chief executive officer and directors within the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, maths and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- The inspectors observed break and lunchtimes and the start of the school day.
- The inspector met leaders to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND. They visited lessons to look at the support these pupils were receiving.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys. They also took account of the responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Emma Law, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Megan Underhill

Ofsted Inspector

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