

Inspection of a good school: The Milford Academy

Dungannon Road, Clifton Estate, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG11 9BT

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 June 2021

Outcome

The Milford Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at The Milford Academy. The 'Milford Values' are clear to see in the daily operation of the school. Pupils work hard and are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning. One pupil told the inspector that 'I'm on fire', as they talked about how interested they were with getting on with their learning. This is typical.

Pupils enjoy learning the curriculum. Teachers make lessons interesting. Trips or events help make learning memorable in every topic. These include working with local artists and art galleries, visiting Nottingham Castle, going to Wollaton Park and attending residential trips. At the time of the inspection, pupils in the early years were learning about the animals that were visiting from a local farm park.

Staff are ambitious for pupils and have positive relationships with families. Teachers help pupils to keep up with learning and to stay safe. The school's pastoral team makes sure that pupils and their families get any help they need.

Behaviour is good. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any poor behaviour quickly. Pupils enjoy the 'tweak of the week' that the headteacher has introduced. This helps pupils to improve on their already positive conduct.

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

The school's curriculum sets out what pupils will learn in each subject, each term. The curriculum is ambitious. Leaders have thought carefully about the order that curriculum content is taught in. However, curriculum plans do not always make clear which are the most important parts that pupils should remember.

Reading is taught well. The school's phonics programme sets out the sounds pupils should know and when. Teachers regularly check to make sure that pupils are keeping up. Those who are not get help straight away. Those who fall behind get extra lessons to catch up. Pupils continue to improve their reading once they have mastered phonics. Leaders

ensure that pupils get to read a wide range of texts, authors and genres as they move through the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They read regularly. Those who do not read enough at home get more help in school.

Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. Teachers help pupils to remember more by revisiting what pupils have learned before. The mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. The mathematics leader has made sure that staff are well trained. The mathematics curriculum is relatively new, but it is working well. Pupils remember what they have learned.

The early years curriculum needs strengthening. It does not take into account the Milford early start unit. This means that children in this part of the school are not as well prepared for the Nursery Year and beyond as well as they could be. Leaders have rightly identified that the learning environment in this part of the school needs to be developed. A new, much improved area is being prepared ready for September 2021.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do well. Leaders systematically find the best way of helping pupils with SEND. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) regularly checks to make sure that the help pupils receive is working. The SENDCo works with the school's pastoral team to make sure that everyone is working together to support pupils with SEND. The SENDCo makes sure that these pupils are made high priority.

Senior leaders have revitalised the school's direction and ambition. They have the full support of the school's community, which shares their ambition. Parents say that communication has improved. They appreciate being able to talk to leaders and teachers before and after school about their child's learning or life at the school.

The governing body remains ambitious for the school. Governors understand their responsibilities and work well with leaders to carry these out. They recognise the ambition and refocus on the curriculum that senior leaders have brought to the school.

The school has benefited from working with the Nottingham Schools Trust, which has helped the school to strengthen leadership and to develop the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is given the highest priority in the school. The three leaders responsible for safeguarding make sure that staff get regular training. All staff understand their responsibilities. The school's pastoral team makes sure that the work to support pupils and their families is joined up and effective.

Safeguarding records are detailed and fit for purpose.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans do not always make clear enough the most important things that pupils should recall. This means that pupils do not consistently remember some parts of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans, in all subjects, identify the most important things that pupils are expected to know and remember.
- Curriculum plans in the early years do not take into account what is happening in the Milford early start unit. This means that pupils are not as well prepared for the Nursery Year and beyond as well as they could be. Leaders should ensure that plans for the early years include, and build upon, what children learn in the Milford early start unit.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Milford Primary School, to be good in March 2012.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	138741
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10198462
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Dickinson
Headteacher	Robert Perkins
Website	www.milfordacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has opened the Milford early start unit, for children aged two-years old and above.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-2021 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and groups of staff and pupils. They spoke with three representatives of the governing body, including the chair, and representatives of the Nottingham Schools Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art and music. Inspectors spoke with leaders, pupils and staff, visited lessons, listened to pupils read to adults in school, and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors looked at the school's record of employments checks and a sample of the school's safeguarding records, and spoke with safeguarding leaders.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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