

Middleton Primary School

Noon Layer Drive, Middleton, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK10 9EN

Inspection dates

23 May and 14–15 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides determined and resolute leadership. Her drive to ensure that every pupil is prepared for their next stage of education leads to excellent outcomes for all pupils.
- The early years provision is highly effective in supporting children's rapid development and learning. A nurturing environment enables children to become highly confident and articulate learners. As a result, they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make excellent progress and attain highly in English and mathematics.
- Outstanding teaching over time ensures that pupils are extremely well prepared for secondary school. In 2016, the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above the national average.
- Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ask challenging questions to support leaders to seek further improvements.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress as a result of the effective monitoring, support and guidance they receive.
- The school supports and develops pupils' personal development and welfare outstandingly well. The headteacher establishes an environment where every child, parent and member of staff is valued highly and their needs considered carefully.
- The curriculum is well designed and captures pupils' imaginations extremely well. It is underpinned by the school's aim of 'learning for life'.
- Staff and parents speak very highly of the school. They work well together and say they are proud to be part of the school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is excellent. Pupils say they feel extremely safe and are very happy at school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils show great respect for the ways of life of others and treat each other with kindness and consideration.
- Pupils' behaviour at all times is of the highest order. Relationships are strong and leaders instil in pupils a clear understanding of fairness and respect.
- Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to improve minor areas of the school's work, such as refining improvement planning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Streamline improvement plans so that they are more precise about how the impact of actions to improve the school will be checked.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is driven, ambitious and uncompromising in her pursuit of excellence. Her vision permeates the school. All staff are committed to ensuring that every pupil is 'secondary ready'. Consistent high-quality leadership has ensured that outcomes for pupils over the past three years have been significantly better than those of pupils nationally.
- Staff morale is high because senior leaders create a culture where teachers are challenged, supported and enthused. In the online staff questionnaire, 100% of staff agree that leaders have created a culture that is aspirational for all pupils. Staff are proud to be members of Middleton. A typical comment from staff was, 'The leadership at the school is amazing. I feel so supported and valued.'
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent wrote, 'This is a strong academic school. It gives children aspirational goals and empowers them to reach these goals. It is a dynamic and forward-looking school.'
- Middle leaders are highly effective in their roles. Subject leaders are passionate and extremely reflective practitioners. They monitor the quality of teaching and learning effectively. Excellent training and support ensures that middle leaders are continually developing and evaluating their leadership skills.
- The headteacher believes that all members of the school community should be challenged and supported. Performance management of staff is used effectively to raise standards and tackle underachievement. School leaders monitor the quality of teaching effectively and tackle robustly any underperformance. Their unwavering drive to 'be the best they can' permeates throughout the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. An extensive range of educational visits and visitors to the school enriches their experiences. Pupils take part in elections for the school council and learn about democracy. They demonstrate great tolerance towards each other, valuing difference and diversity.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and supports outstanding learning. It ensures that basic skills are taught very well, while also ensuring exceptional levels of pupils' personal development. Leaders embed teamwork and resilience, which together help pupils apply their skills within different subjects. The curriculum is further enhanced by additional music and French, as well as outdoor learning and visits. Pupils practise their writing, reading and mathematics skills frequently and effectively. The many opportunities offered to pupils result in their making outstanding progress across the school.
- Leaders make certain that this is a school where every child is known as an individual. This excellent commitment ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve success. Additional funding is used highly effectively to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school promotes pupils' understanding of fundamental British values highly effectively. Leaders foster the principles of democracy, for example, through pupils taking part in elections to select members of the school council. The school's key

values such as 'respect' and 'trust' encourage pupils to understand and display these qualities frequently in and around the school.

- The school uses pupil premium funding very effectively. Leaders' careful monitoring and wise use of funding has a significant impact on accelerating disadvantaged pupils' rates of progress.
- Leaders make excellent use of the primary sports funding to raise awareness of, and provide opportunities to take part in, a wide range of clubs. Pupil's participation in activities such as tag rugby, athletics and football is high and this helps promote their healthy lifestyles.
- The school has a very well-developed relationship with the Kingsbridge Educational Trust. The trust provides effective support, such as with the recruitment of the headteacher and the development of subject leaders.
- The school's breakfast club and after-school club are well led and managed. They provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports pupils' excellent social development. The breakfast club provides a tranquil start to the day and has helped improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- All school leaders are committed to excellence and have the drive to make every aspect of school life the best it can be. Leaders recognise the need to streamline some improvement plans so that they illustrate succinctly the impact of leaders' actions.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school's future success and fully support the headteacher's drive for promoting high standards in all aspects of the school's work.
- The governing body provides extremely effective support to the headteacher and senior leaders. They challenge leaders at all levels to ensure that any barriers to success are overcome and that all pupils make rapid progress. Governors' regular visits to the school and their discussions with subject leaders ensure that they know accurately how well the school is doing.
- Governors make sure there is a clear link between decisions made by leaders about pay and teachers' performance.
- Governors make sure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. Similarly they check that the sports premium is used well. Governors are fully committed to equality of opportunity and hold leaders to account to ensure that they meet statutory requirements.
- Governors make sure that they remain effective, regularly attending training and sharing their learning with each other.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Rigorous and robust systems are in place in all areas of safeguarding.

- Staff and governors receive up-to-date training to ensure that all requirements are met. This includes having an informed awareness of the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism.
- The Kingsbridge Educational Trust has undertaken a recent audit to confirm that all aspects of safeguarding are fit for purpose. Staff and parents value the school's work to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding because pupils make excellent progress over time. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour.
- Teaching is innovative, well planned and highly effective at enthusing and engaging all pupils. Teachers combine their excellent subject knowledge with an acute understanding of each pupil's needs. They use assessment information highly effectively to plan activities which help pupils to make strong progress. Teachers' questions support and challenge pupils' thinking and learning extremely well.
- Staff work very well together to share ideas and refine their teaching skills. Teachers continuously reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching because they are ambitious for every pupil. One member of staff said, 'Every adult cares deeply about the children.'
- The teaching of reading is superb and promotes a love of reading. Right from the early years, the teaching of phonics ensures that children quickly learn basic reading skills and start the journey to become avid readers. As they progress through the school, pupils are challenged to read increasingly difficult texts and to rapidly learn the skills of inference and comprehension.
- Teachers are confident in teaching mathematics to high levels, especially in enabling pupils to use a range of methods to solve problems. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils carefully used their reasoning skills and knowledge of shapes to compare the properties of different objects. Consequently, pupils make rapid progress.
- The teaching of writing is excellent and develops pupils' writing skills extremely well. Teachers offer clear guidance so that pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve their writing. Pupils act on this advice effectively.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. As a result, pupils work hard, are willing to take risks and want to do well. Pupils are confident to ask if they do not understand something, as they know that staff will help them.
- Teaching in the wider curriculum is a key strength of the school. The high standards teachers insist upon in reading, writing and mathematics are also expected in other curriculum subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils studying Mayan civilization produced excellent work which compared and contrasted two different civilizations.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and they have a strong impact on pupils' learning. They are particularly effective within the classroom in supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that these pupils are fully included in the lessons and their needs are fully met.

- Excellent teaching prepares pupils exceptionally well for their next school and life beyond. Pupils develop into interested, inquiring and self-motivated learners as a result.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are extremely confident, self-assured learners. They have exemplary attitudes towards their learning and high levels of motivation to try their best.
- Pastoral care is excellent and staff cultivate very supportive relationships with pupils. Pupils value highly the support and guidance all staff provide and they make rapid progress as a result. One pupil described the school as 'friendly, thoughtful and a place where they really care for you'.
- The vast majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after at school. One parent said, 'The staff at Middleton Primary School have managed to build a strong, inclusive and positive community for its pupils and their families.'
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and say that it is rare in their school. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to stay safe, including understanding road safety and how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils demonstrate strong respect for each other and for people from different backgrounds and lifestyles. The school focuses on a core value each month and it is clear to see through many interactions and activities that pupils have high levels of respect, trust and tolerance. As one pupil said, 'There are many different cultures but we are a team.'
- School staff work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families. Staff work relentlessly to provide pupils with a high level of care and support.
- Staff training in child protection and safeguarding issues is highly effective. Pupils say confidently that they are exceptionally well looked after and there is always someone with whom to share a problem.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders, staff and pupils have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils have impeccable manners and are considerate and caring towards each other and adults. One parent said, 'They really stress values and behaviour, as well as academic achievement.'
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities. For example, the 'Year 6 Buddies' provide a high level of care and support for the younger children. This helps reinforce the values of the school and promotes equality and inclusion within the community.

- Attendance levels are above the national average. Pupils enjoy going to school, with one pupil saying the school is 'amazing, inspiring and extraordinary'. The school has excellent procedures in place to check attendance and reduce persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- A relentless focus on high-quality teaching has resulted in pupils achieving outstanding outcomes over time.
- In the early years, pupils make rapid progress so that by the end of the Reception Year the percentage of children who achieve a good level of development is above the national average.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils achieved better than other pupils nationally. Most pupils who do not reach the expected standard in phonics in Year 1, catch up by the end of Year 2.
- In Year 2, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics last year was above national averages. Pupils made rapid progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils achieved better than other pupils nationally in reading.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved age-related expectations by the end of Year 6 was significantly above the national average in the combined results for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's information shows that effective use of pupil premium funding provides disadvantaged pupils with high-quality support. In the 2016 reading test, the average score of these pupils was significantly higher than the national average. All disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 attained higher than the expected standard in the 2016 reading test. In mathematics and writing, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, made similar progress to others nationally.
- The most able pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. The proportion of pupils achieving higher test scores is significantly above the national averages for all subjects in both key stages.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress from their starting points. Some make particularly rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because leaders closely monitor their specific needs and put in place excellent support.
- Pupils from ethnic minority groups make rapid progress. In the key stage 1 2016 tests, the proportion meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. Staff accurately identify their needs and provide excellent support for them.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children make rapid progress in the Reception Year because of outstanding teaching. They start in the early years provision with skills and knowledge that are broadly

typical for their age. The proportion who achieve a good level of development is consistently above the national average and is increasing year on year. Children are extremely well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.

- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults ask thoughtful questions, make good use of informal observations and use lots of different ways to record each child's emerging strengths and areas for development. All adults are involved in reshaping and planning additional activities and resources, responding to children's changing interests and engaging with children.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. They demonstrate very high levels of engagement and concentration, and use their time extremely well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and as a result they work happily and very well together.
- The provision is exceptionally well led and managed. The setting has a range of rich resources that stimulate and inspire the children. Teachers plan excellent indoor and outdoor activities that help to promote a love of learning. For example, in one activity children were shopping for items they could take to the beach. They used their number knowledge to help solve problems, applying their reasoning skills extremely well. Adults used questions skilfully to develop their thinking further.
- Staff ensure that disadvantaged pupils have excellent support so that they achieve in line with their peers. This is also the case for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The well-being of every child is at the forefront of everything the school does. Parents told inspectors that they find it easy to communicate with the adults who work in the early years provision, and that their children are happy and safe. One parent said, 'This is an excellent school, with committed and enthusiastic staff and great leadership. It is a great place for the children to be.'

School details

Unique reference number	140734
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10024554-2

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	569
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Sam Summers
Headteacher	Rachel Roberts
Telephone number	01908 604 851
Website	www.middletonschool.org/
Email address	office@middletonschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Middleton is an expanding school and is currently moving from two forms to three forms of entry.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. The biggest groups in the school are White British, and those from any other white, Indian and African heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- There have been changes in the leadership recently with the appointment of a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher. The new headteacher was deputy headteacher at Middleton prior to being appointed headteacher.
- The school joined the Kingsbridge Educational Trust in September 2016.
- Children in the three Reception classes attend full time.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 49 lessons; all of these were joint observations with either the headteacher, deputy headteacher or key stage 2 leader.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, and pupils' work in books.
- Discussions took place with several groups of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Meetings were held with school staff, eight members of the governing body, parents and carers.
- Inspectors took into consideration 50 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 113 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors took into account 155 responses to Ofsted's 'Parent View' questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Deirdre Crutchley	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Henderson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's 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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