

Inspection of Middlefield Primary Academy

Andrew Road, Eynesbury, St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 2QE

Inspection dates:	21 and 22 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Carol Besant. This school is part of the Diamond Learning Partnership 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) Susannah Connell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Godfrey Smith.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this happy and welcoming school. The school has an unwavering determination to provide an environment where pupils belong and can thrive. Pupils love learning and attend well. They develop into confident, well-rounded citizens.

The broad and balanced curriculum supports pupils to develop, not just academically, but more widely in a range of ways. Pupils achieve well and are suitably prepared for their next stage in learning.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being and readiness to learn. Relationships between pupils and adults are highly positive. Pupils are well cared for. Any pupil who needs a bit of extra support is expertly cheered up by Pippa, the school dog.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite, articulate and friendly. They have excellent attitudes to learning. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Playtime is a happy occasion. Pupils move from the playground to the classroom seamlessly. No learning time is lost.

All pupils benefit from the extensive outdoor learning provision, which enriches and extends pupils' class-based learning. Pupils take on responsibilities such as growing fresh produce and caring for the chickens within the school grounds.

Pupil leaders revel in their roles. Their views are valued and respected. The school is now more environmentally sustainable as a result of their work.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum across all subjects. This is evolving and developing over time. Some subject thinking is more established than others. The school continues to review and refine their curriculum to ensure it fully meets the needs of its pupils.

Children make a strong start in early years. They settle into school quickly and learn the routines of school straight away. Children learn a well-considered curriculum, which ensures they develop strong foundations in learning. Children are able to concentrate well in adult-led sessions and on more independent tasks. For example, the discovery garden gives them the chance to explore and learn. Children in early years achieve well and are well prepared for Year 1.

A culture of reading emanates through the school. Staff model a love of reading and pupils respond with the same enthusiasm. Trained staff deliver a structured phonics programme and pupils read books which match the sounds they know. Any pupil who falls behind is supported to catch up. As pupils move through the school, they read a wide range of different books and strive to become a 'millionaire reader'. Pupils become confident, fluent readers.

The curriculum is typically taught effectively. Where the curriculum is firmly in place, pupils demonstrate a depth of learning. Adults check how well pupils are learning and successfully adapt how and what they teach to ensure pupils make positive progression through the curriculum. Pupils retain the key knowledge and are able to talk confidently about their learning. In some subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of implementation. In these subjects, pupils are not as able to consistently learn and remember the intended knowledge. In these cases, pupils do not develop as deep an understanding. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they might in these less established areas of learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and supported well. Plans identify the adaptations pupils with SEND need to succeed. These are generally put in place and support pupils with SEND to learn successfully alongside their peers. Some pupils with SEND require a more individualised approach. The school works closely with external professionals to ensure these pupils get the support they need to be successful.

The behaviour policy has recently been revised. The school recognised behaviour could be even better. They wanted to ensure consistency across the school. This is working exceptionally well. Adults and pupils all share the same high expectations. Pupils meet these eagerly. Pupil 'readiness monitors' support staff to ensure the standards of behaviour are exceptional across every part of the school day.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They develop empathy and respect for other cultures and beliefs and value difference. Pupils speak maturely about their physical and mental health. They confidently describe how they can share their worries with friends and staff. Pupils actively contribute to their local community by performing to local residents. They attend residential trips and perform in national singing concerts. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They visit and monitor provision regularly. Staff and parents are proud of their school. Staff value the training and support they receive from school leaders and the wider trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject curriculum thinking is not fully implemented. In these subjects, pupils do not develop a depth of knowledge over time. The school needs to continue to evaluate

and refine their curriculum to support pupils to build upon their knowledge successfully across all subjects, so they achieve consistently well throughout the curriculum.

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	138595
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10345345
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Godfrey Smith
CEO of the trust	Susannah Connell
Headteacher	Carol Besant
Website	www.middlefield.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust.
- The school uses two registered providers of alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.

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). 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other school leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the local governing body, directors of the trust and a trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of local governing body meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and conversations held during the inspection.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lucille Pollard

Ofsted Inspector

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