

Inspection of a good school: Miers Court Primary School

Silverspot Close, Rainham, Kent ME8 8JR

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2021

Outcome

Miers Court Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Miers Court Primary School is a welcoming and caring school in the heart of the community. Pupils feel happy and safe because they are well looked after. Pupils told the lead inspector that bullying rarely happens, but that sometimes they experience friendship issues. They said that problems are sorted out quickly. As a result, they enjoy coming to school. One pupil said: 'It is a nice place because it makes you feel welcome and teachers are always there to help you.'

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. The school's learning and house-point systems help pupils to focus on developing attributes such as kindness, resilience and independence. Pupils respond very well to the praise they get from staff. Most pupils have a real thirst for learning.

Pupils learn about many different themes during their time here. Assemblies and focus weeks help to prepare pupils to become active citizens in society. The school council has been committed to the 'global learning project', which encourages pupils to engage with the world they live in. Pupils have worked on projects on matters such as air quality and crisp-packet recycling.

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

Leaders across the school and trust work together well to make sure that the school's vision, summed up as 'Shining Bright, Aiming High', is shared by all staff. Governors challenge and support leaders to ensure that this vision is realised and pupils have the best chance of success. Training for staff means that they know how to support pupils so that they can all succeed.

Leaders believe that reading is essential to pupils' progress at school. They have made it a priority. Children in Reception begin learning to read as soon as possible. The school's phonics programme is well planned so that it develops pupils' reading. Pupils practise

reading every day and they enjoy the interesting books staff provide for them. As a result, pupils read fluently and confidently.

Leaders have developed a well-planned mathematics curriculum. Pupils enjoy their lessons and experience success when they have grasped something new. What pupils learn in mathematics gradually builds as they move through the school. This means that they can tackle more complex learning because of what they already know. Teachers check on pupils' learning regularly and quickly spot those who need more help. The support provided means that they keep up with the curriculum.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders have established a curriculum that is consistently well planned and well sequenced. Subject leaders provide support and guidance to staff and work well with each other to ensure that pupils know and remember more in all subjects. Leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge and skills pupils will need across the curriculum from Reception to Year 6. For example, in music, leaders have carefully considered the musical elements pupils will need to help them with future learning, such as sound, melody and rhythm.

Leaders have developed clear assessment processes in all subjects. These are used to monitor what pupils know, remember and can do. In most subjects, leaders and teachers use this information well to tailor lessons so that they meet the individual needs of pupils. However, in some subjects, learning is not matched well enough to pupils' ability and this sometimes slows their progress.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified when they join the school. The work to identify children with SEND starts in the first weeks of Reception. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies to ensure that the right support is put in place. As a result, pupils with SEND are well supported.

The school's personal, social and health education and religious education programmes ensure that pupils learn about many important issues. These include healthy relationships, friendships, diversity, tolerance, respect, healthy living and different religions. Pupils recently learned about diversity. A range of extra-curricular clubs provide opportunities for pupils to develop their interests. Leaders have begun to resume these clubs following the pandemic. Participation in local competitions has resulted in the school winning many trophies.

Staff who spoke with the lead inspector enjoy working at the school and are proud to be members of staff. They speak highly of leaders and appreciate the support they get. They feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. Some think that joining The Howard Academy Trust has led to more training and development opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Relationships are important at Miers Court. Staff take the time to get to know pupils and their families. This means that they can spot changes in behaviour that could suggest that a child needs help.

All staff receive regular training so that they understand the risks faced by pupils. Simple yet effective systems mean that staff can easily report concerns they have. The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are well trained, proactive and relentless in following up concerns.

Checks on staff working at the school are detailed. Processes for visitors to the school, including contractors, are thorough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment processes in some subjects are not used as well as they are in others. This means that learning is not always matched well enough to pupils' ability. Leaders need to further refine their assessment processes so that pupils consistently make progress in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be 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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Miers Court Primary School, to be good in March 2015.

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.

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	144639
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10203158
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	391
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Gillian Marshall
Headteacher	Susan Chapman
Website	www.mierscourt-that.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined The Howard Academy Trust in August 2017.
- There is an executive headteacher who oversees the primary academies in the trust.
- The head of school has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Rainbow Pre-School and Out of School Club is located on the same site as the school but is not managed by the school.
- The Inspiring Change Primary Support Service operates from a separate building on the same site as the school but is not managed by the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. He discussed the curriculum with leaders, staff and pupils. He visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and heard pupils read.
- The inspector looked at curriculum planning in a range of other subjects.
- The inspector met with trust leaders, school leaders, staff, pupils and those with responsibility for governance, including a trustee and the chair of the local academy board.
- The inspector visited the early years provision.
- The inspector observed the start and end of the school day and lunchtime.
- The inspector scrutinised behaviour, bullying and racist incident records.
- The inspector scrutinised local academy board minutes and records of monitoring carried out by the trust and subject leaders at the school.
- The inspector met with the SENCo to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey. He took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and comments made by those who responded. He spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector looked at the school's website and policies, met with two DSLs and spoke with pupils and staff. He scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with trustees and governors. He scrutinised a selection of child protection records.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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