

# Inspection of Mildmay Junior School

Robin Way, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8AU

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. Parents say things like: 'Our child is very happy at school and loves learning all of the different things they do.' Teachers expect pupils to work hard and, as a result, they do.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported by teachers who know them well and give them the support they need.

Pupils who attend the school's specialist resource base are given the skills to be highly independent and confident members of the school. They learn and develop a strong understanding about what it is to be part of the deaf community.

Pupils find that the curriculum is interesting, and they enjoy having lots of visitors into the school and trips out of school. They learn to read, write and do mathematics well. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, such as archery, a singing/signing choir, cross-country and cookery.

If pupils feel that they are being bullied, which does not happen often, pupils are confident that adults make sure this is stopped quickly. Adults check on pupils' well-being daily and follow up with anyone who is upset or worried.

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

Reading is given high priority in the school's curriculum. The books for early readers are well matched to their level of phonics knowledge. Staff are well trained to support any pupils who need additional help. There is also additional support for older pupils who need help to catch up. Classroom libraries contain a wide range of books to interest pupils as they become more confident as independent readers.

Most subjects are planned and delivered well. The curriculum builds so that pupils develop the knowledge and skills that they need over time. Leaders have made sure that teachers have appropriate subject knowledge to be able to deliver these subjects. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of the curriculum and provide high-quality work, especially, but not exclusively, in art and mathematics.

In a few subjects, planning and teaching do not always ensure that pupils are provided with subject-specific knowledge and skills. For example, in history and geography, teachers focus on writing skills but do not focus on the subject-specific curriculum as they do in other subjects. As a result, pupils' understanding in these areas is less well developed.

Provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school's work. Pupils' needs are quickly identified, and support is clearly planned out and monitored. Staff receive a range of training and as a result are highly skilled in supporting pupils, including supporting pupils with any specialist equipment.

Pupils who attend the school's specialist resource base access a range of small-group teaching, intervention and mainstream lessons as part of their provision. Over time, pupils become increasingly confident and independent in managing their audiology equipment.

Pupils' personal development is a priority in the school. Every day, staff check in with pupils about how they are feeling. In their lessons, pupils discuss and debate controversial and current issues. They respect each other's views and understand that they might have different opinions about things.

Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. Where there are incidents of poor behaviour, adults deal with these quickly and with a positive approach. Pupils play well with each other at break and lunchtimes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy playing a variety of games at breaktime. The school council has recently raised money in response to the requests from Years 3 and 4 pupils who would like more to do at playtime.

Since the last inspection, senior leaders, the multi-academy trust and other external consultants have worked closely with staff to improve their practice. Staff feel well supported. Parents are very positive about the leadership of the school and the communication they receive about their children's education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. Regular updates for staff about aspects of safeguarding help them have good knowledge of the risks that pupils may face.

There are several ways for pupils to share anxieties, which helps pupils to feel safe. They are clear that adults listen to them.

Record-keeping is of a high standard, and leaders know the pupils well. All appropriate checks are made on adults who are in the school regularly.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, such as history and geography, there is a high emphasis on English skills but less on the subject-specific knowledge and skills that pupils need to develop. As a result, pupils' understanding of these subjects is less well developed. Teachers need to ensure that the historical and geographical content and skills are addressed sufficiently in planning and teaching, so that pupils are as confident in these subjects as they are in the rest of 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.

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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141573
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200506
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Keith Mogford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dominic Mulholland
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mildmay-jun.essex.sch.uk/">www.mildmay-jun.essex.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	22 and 23 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bridge Academy Trust. It reopened as a new school in January 2019.
- The school has a 12-place specialist resource base for pupils with a hearing impairment.
- The school shares some staff and site facilities with the neighbouring infant school, Mildmay Infant and Nursery School, which is also part of the same multi-academy trust.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior and subject leaders. They met with the multi-academy trust's primary leader, the chair

of the local governing committee and the chair of trustees. They spoke to a wide range of staff and pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited some other lessons and saw other samples of work. They heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the 80 responses to the parent survey, 22 responses to the staff survey and 76 responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

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