

Inspection of a good school: Mildene Primary School

65 Barbrook Lane, Tiptree, Colchester, Essex CO5 0EF

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2022

Outcome

Mildene Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They get on well together. Pupils feel safe and cared for. Adults check how they are feeling. Pupils learn to embrace diversity and inclusivity. They say that 'whoever you are there is a place here where you will always fit in'.

Pupils follow a broad and interesting curriculum. They enjoy learning. Pupils talk knowledgeably about their learning. In lessons, pupils work well together. They listen attentively to teachers and concentrate on their work. Pupils want to do their best.

Pupils develop the skills needed to form positive relationships. They make good friends. Pupils know about different types of bullying and what to do if they have a problem. They say that bullying hardly ever happens and is sorted out if it does occur.

Pupils love all the extra activities offered at lunchtime and after school. There is something to interest every child. Sporting activities are especially popular. A high proportion of pupils take part in sports clubs. Pupils are pleased about the return of trips and visits, which were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Leaders have ensured that, from the start of the early years, all pupils follow a broad curriculum. In most subjects, learning is well ordered so that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge and adapt their teaching to suit their class. Pupils achieve well in these subjects.

Teachers are quick to spot when pupils are falling behind in their learning. They make changes during lessons so that pupils can spend more time practising the important information. This means that pupils can remember what they have learned in most subjects. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not clearly outlined the key knowledge they expect pupils to learn. When this is the case, pupils describe what they did or the activity rather than what they have learned.

Leaders prioritise the importance of teaching pupils to read. Phonics is taught well to early readers. Staff quickly identify those pupils who find learning to read more challenging. Pupils receive regular 'keep up' sessions to help them catch up. This ensures that pupils become accurate, confident and fluent readers.

Reading continues to be prioritised throughout key stage 2. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books and listening to stories. They take part in the reading competitions such as the million-word reader and accelerated reader quizzes. Pupils talk proudly about their achievements in these competitions.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are suitably trained to help pupils access the learning in class. Pupils with SEND have their needs met and can demonstrate what they know and can do more in almost all subjects.

Leaders have placed their core values at the heart of the school's work. Pupils are rewarded when they demonstrate a value, for example collaborating within group work or showing resilience by continuing to persevere with their learning. Pupils are developing positive attitudes to learning and pride in their achievements.

The school's approach to personal development is well thought out. Pupils of all ages learn that people are different but equal. They show a great deal of maturity when talking about different relationships, faiths and cultures. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to take on responsibility, such as being anti-bullying ambassadors or librarians.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' welfare. They ensure that all staff are appropriately trained. Staff follow the school procedures if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders are quick to follow up concerns. They then provide pupils with the support needed.

Pupils are taught age-appropriate strategies to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using online technologies. They are increasingly aware of where they can ask for help if they have any issues or worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, the curriculum does not sufficiently set out the key knowledge that pupils need to know. Pupils do not learn the depth of knowledge they need to build up their understanding over time. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is suitably progressive and well designed across all subjects. They should ensure that teachers are aware of and teach the key knowledge pupils need to learn and know, so pupils can achieve well.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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	114760
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10200170
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susie Threadgold
Headteacher	Susan Locke
Website	www.milldene.essex.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, science and physical education. As part of these, the inspector spoke with leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and spoke with teachers. The inspector also looked at pupils' work and listened to them read.
- The inspector also considered a range of documentation provided by leaders and information on the school's website.

- The inspector spoke with and observed pupils at break and lunchtimes as well as during lesson times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed a range of documentation and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector considered the 22 responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 13 free-text responses. There were no responses to the Ofsted staff or pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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