

Inspection of Milwards Primary School and Nursery

Paringdon Road, Harlow, Essex CM19 4QX

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement
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The headteacher of this school is Michael Doughty. This school is part of Harlow Inspirational Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mary Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by William Cairns.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is at the centre of the community. Adults know pupils and their families well. The community ethos of the school enables new pupils to settle quickly. Pupils say it is easy to make friends. They feel looked after as adults provide well-thought-out care. Pupils like the 'little extras' leaders provide, such as daily bagels for everyone. They know adults will help them if they have worries.

Pupils behave well. They rise to the school's high expectations, being polite and showing good manners throughout the school day. Pupils stay focused as they enjoy their lessons. This is because adults adapt the curriculum to make learning manageable and accessible to all pupils. Pupils receive the support they need at the right time.

Pupils appreciate the many opportunities they have to learn new things. This may be through having mental health sessions and learning how to breathe properly or looking after the rescue chickens. They feel prepared for life's challenges. Pupils know how to keep safe online and outside of school.

Pupils enjoy sharing their learning in weekly assemblies. They are proud to be selected as 'star of the week' for excellent work.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum. It equips pupils with the most important knowledge they need to learn. The curriculum planning is broken down into small steps which build lesson by lesson. This helps pupils to succeed at school. The emphasis on subject-specific vocabulary means that pupils use this with precision, explaining complex ideas in a simple way.

The school provides ongoing training for teachers in all subjects. Staff know the school's curriculum and the best ways to teach the content. Teachers check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. They address misunderstandings effectively and help to move pupils quickly on. Teachers look closely at where pupils have gaps in their knowledge and address these. As a result, pupils succeed in their learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Since the last inspection, leaders have raised the profile of reading in school. They promote a love of reading through events such as the parent and child reading café and virtual library. Pupils love reading and borrowing books from the redeveloped library. They enjoy talking about their class reading books. Children start to develop the skills they need to learn to read in Nursery. For instance, listening closely to rhymes and songs. Daily phonics sessions enable most pupils to develop as confident readers. A very small number of pupils are not given the right books to help them learn to read. This hampers their development as readers.

Parents, justifiably, hold the school's SEND provision in high regard. Staff have high aspirations for what pupils with SEND can achieve. Adults receive effective training so they can help identify pupils' needs. They also use pupils' support plans well, providing helpful ways for pupils to access their lessons. Subsequently, pupils with SEND access the same, ambitious, curriculum as their peers. They make good progress and enjoy their learning.

The school's early years provision has improved. Engaging resources provide children with meaningful opportunities to develop their learning and curiosity. This ensures all children make progress in all areas of learning. Robust transition arrangements support children to settle quickly when they start school. Skilled adults identify children's needs and ensure children are ready for Year 1.

Most pupils attend school on a regular basis. The school provides a wide range of support to help pupils attend, including an early morning running club. Pupils are polite around school and are courteous towards each other. They show genuine interest in each other's ideas and enjoy talking to visitors. The school has clear behaviour expectations. This includes the use of rewards and 'consequences'. In some lessons, this is not used in a consistent way by some staff meaning sometimes poor behaviour goes unchallenged.

The school has introduced a new personal, social, health and economic curriculum. Pupils are already benefiting from the change. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. Adults provide a high level of pastoral care for pupils and their families. This supports pupils to be in school and ready for learning. The school ensures all pupils take part in sports competitions, such as football tournaments. There are a wide range of clubs for pupils.

Trustees and governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge and support leaders' work. They ensure adults' workload and well-being are a focus. Adults say they feel supported and valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The books given to a few pupils are not precisely matched to their reading knowledge. As a result, these pupils struggle to read and are not catching up quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure all adults are trained to match pupils' books to the sounds they know.
- The school's behaviour policy is not consistently applied by all adults. This means that in a small proportion of lessons, pupils' behaviour does not match the

school's expectations. Leaders should ensure all adults receive training to support the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy.

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	144631
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10295100
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	William Cairns
CEO of the trust	Mary Evans
Headteacher	Michael Doughty
Website	www.milwards.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Harlow Inspirational Learning Trust.
- There is a Nursery provision on site, which is managed by the school for children aged three and above.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued 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 and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the trust board. The lead inspector also held a meeting with members of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, adults 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 met pupils from different year groups to talk about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents provided by the school. These included the school's strategic plan, curriculum documents and school policies.
- Inspectors considered 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included 43 comments from parents and carers in the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the 25 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 29 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lisa Massey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ania Vaughan

Ofsted Inspector

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