

Inspection of a good school: Millfields Community School

Hilsea Street, Hackney, London E5 0SH

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2024

Outcome

Millfields Community School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One parent, typical of many, said, 'The school goes the extra mile to get to know children, parents and carers. This genuine interest helps make everyone welcome and allows the pupils to feel at ease and thrive.'

In class, pupils are focused on learning. Leaders encourage them to treat others with respect, build their resilience and look after their physical and mental health. Pupils are safe. They have an adult whom they can talk to if they wish.

The school council is well established and plays a key part in the life of the school. For example, during democracy week, pupils are elected to leadership positions, including as cabinet member, eco-champ and equalities champ. In these roles, pupils contribute to decisions about the running of the school. Extra-curricular music provision is also a key strength. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments, and the school choirs are very popular. Pupils experience camping under canvas in Year 6 and take part in activities that include team-building and cooking outdoors.

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

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is well thought through across the school. In the majority of subjects, leaders have thought in detail about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn and remember over time. This is also the case in early years. There, the curriculum helps children to develop new language and understanding. For example, in Reception, children learned about making a profit through role play, when building and selling furniture that they had constructed. Staff feel supported and respected by senior leaders. The school reduces unnecessary administrative tasks so that teachers can spend their time supporting pupils' learning. Those responsible for

governance use their expertise to hold the school to account for the actions that it takes and ensure that the school is effectively led.

Teachers, and specialist teachers of subjects such as music and Spanish, are subject experts. Teaching usually checks that pupils understand what they have learned and helps pupils to remember key learning in the long term. As a result, pupils' recall of important knowledge, such as the order of events in history, is secure. Pupils' work is typically of a high standard.

Pupils' reading skills are treated as a top priority across all year groups. Children start to learn to read from the beginning of Reception. Through daily reading sessions, they learn and practise new words. Any pupils who may need help to improve their reading fluency receive additional practice sessions each week so that they can keep up with their peers. Leaders are focused on building up pupils' writing skills because pupils spent less time practising writing than on other subjects during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The school organises appropriate support for pupils with SEND in mainstream classes. Specialist support helps selected pupils with SEND to learn and remember the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Generally, this helps pupils with SEND to learn all that they should. However, sometimes, teaching and resources for some pupils with SEND in mainstream classes are not adapted as effectively.

Pupils with SEND in the additionally resourced provision receive tailored support so that their needs are met. Staff in this provision know the pupils very well, and professional relationships are strong and well established.

Pupils are attentive and polite. The school ensures that pupils speak with each other and resolve any issues or behaviour problems when these arise. Pupils commonly walk between classes sensibly and calmly. In the playground, pupils respect one another and make lasting friendships. In early years, children play together kindly and share toys.

Leaders do all that they can to maintain high levels of pupil attendance. For example, leaders contact parents whenever a pupil is absent, and where necessary, conduct home visits to check that pupils are safe.

The extra-curricular and student leadership programme is very extensive. The school organises a large selection of clubs. Pupils participate fully in these. These include clubs for dodgeball, Mandarin and science. Pupils regularly attend outings to deepen their understanding of the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teaching and resources are not as routinely well adapted for all pupils with SEND in mainstream classes. This means that some pupils with SEND in mainstream classes are not as routinely well supported as other pupils with SEND to build their curriculum knowledge over time. The school should continue to ensure that teaching and resources are routinely adapted to meet the needs of all pupils with SEND.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

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	100231
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10268716
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	639
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joe Walker and Ben McMullen (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Jane Betsworth
Website	www.millfields.hackney.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils with SEND and caters for pupils with autism. Pupils in this provision do not usually attend mainstream classes.
- The school uses no alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour and attendance, early reading and pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils respectively.

Inspection team

Guy Forbat, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Bryant

Ofsted Inspector

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