

Inspection of Millhouse Primary School

Tavistock Road, Laindon, Basildon, Essex SS15 5QF

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and offer a warm welcome to visitors. Kind and nurturing relationships exist between staff and pupils. Pupils value the strong pastoral support in place for them. They know staff will help them if they have a worry.

Many pupils attend a range of after-school clubs such as, gardening, boxing and choir. Pupils benefit from a number of leadership opportunities such as being school councillors and mental health ambassadors. From these roles, pupils make a positive contribution to their school. Pupils are determined to achieve the 'Millhouse Milestones'. Younger pupils are eager to demonstrate that they can tie their shoelaces, so that a milestone can be ticked off.

Behaviour in classrooms is calm. This is because routines are well-established, which starts from the early years. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard. The school aims for pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects. They usually do. However, in 2024 pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 6 were below national standards. This means that some pupils are not as well prepared as they could be for the next stage of their education.

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

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum here. Pupils read a range of genres and authors as they progress through the school's curriculum. Pupils are read aloud to daily. Children in the early years listen intently as teachers read carefully chosen texts. These experiences develop pupils love for reading.

Children are taught to read as soon as they join the Reception Year. This is because the school wants pupils to learn to read fluently. Staff are trained effectively in early reading. Books that pupils use to practise reading match the sounds that they know. Therefore, pupils read with confidence. Staff give pupils, including those pupils with SEND who may find reading difficult, targeted support to keep up. This means pupils have the skills to read unfamiliar words well.

The curriculum is well sequenced. The school has identified what it wants pupils to learn and when. This key knowledge is broken down into smaller steps that build logically from the early years to Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 6 can divide a three-digit number by a two-digit number because they can recall times table facts quickly. In the Reception Year, children make a map of their journey to school. They can identify features such as 'roads', 'bridges' and 'flats'. This is because they have learned previously about the features of their local area.

The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 4 use ambitious vocabulary such as 'trudging', 'weary' and 'hunched'. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly. For instance, pupils in Year 1 recognise digraphs in words because they have been taught that two letters make one

sound. However, sometimes teachers' checking of what pupils know and remember is not effective. This means that some pupils struggle to apply what they have previously been taught to their current learning. In addition, sometimes, the teaching methods and work given to pupils are not adapted effectively enough to meet needs. This means that some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, do not achieve as well as they could.

The academic needs of pupils with SEND are identified as swiftly as possible. The school takes appropriate measures in identifying any barriers to pupils' learning. Pupils with SEND receive the help they need. This means that they are included in all that the school has to offer.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Most sustain their concentration well. Therefore, learning is not interrupted by any inappropriate behaviour. Pupils learn to manage their emotions well, this includes children in the early years.

Attendance remains a priority for the school. Staff support parents and carers to establish consistent attendance routines with their children. Yet, despite the school implementing a range of appropriate strategies, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is still too high.

The personal, social, health and economic curriculum is well-considered. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and positive relationships. They are taught how to stay safe online and learn about consent in an age-appropriate manner.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the school. They have processes in place to check that the school's actions to raise standards are effective. Staff value the help they receive to manage their workload and support their well-being. This includes those teachers at the start of their teaching careers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, learning activities are not adapted effectively enough for some pupils. When this happens, pupils struggle to learn the important ideas securely and some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that learning activities and teaching methods are adapted effectively so that all pupils achieve well.
- In some subjects, teachers' checks of what pupils know and remember is not as effective as in many other subjects. This hampers the progress pupils make in their understanding of the curriculum because misconceptions are not addressed and pupils do not have a secure understanding of some important subject knowledge. The school

should ensure that teachers check what pupils know and remember effectively to ensure that pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and achieve well.

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	114912
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345135
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	619
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Smith
Headteachers	Jenny Haken (Head of School) Diane McGarry (Head of School)
Website	www.millhouse.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Vision Primary Federation which consists of three schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school 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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development.
- An inspector met with representatives of the local governing board and with the school improvement partner.
- 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.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' wider development and behaviour and attendance. The inspectors also met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss these aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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