

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Mile Cross Primary School

Braiser Road, Mile Cross, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 2QU

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024

Outcome

Mile Cross Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are given every opportunity to shine at Mile Cross Primary. Pupils achieve well academically and have many other opportunities to excel. They develop into mature, confident young people.

The school creates a culture of aspiration and shared success, with a broad and interesting curriculum that opens pupils' eyes to the world around them. Pupils feel safe and happy attending school. They love learning.

Behaviour is strong both in class and around school. Adults model positive relationships to pupils. Pupils respond well and get along together. The playground is a hive of activity. Adults support pupils to enjoy games such as table tennis, basketball and football. While the 'Nurture Nook' gives pupils the chance to have a period of calm.

School councillors and house captains revel in the chance to take on leadership roles. They have an active voice in school life. Pupils have rich and varied opportunities to develop their wider talents and interests. Trips and sporting, musical and art clubs are offered to all. Pupils gain many exciting and valuable opportunities that they might not be able to access elsewhere. Mile Cross is a truly inclusive community.

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

School leaders are very ambitious for what pupils can achieve at this school. The school has given careful thought to what pupils will learn. It wants pupils to learn about Norwich,

Norfolk and beyond. The thoughtfully crafted curriculum gives pupils every opportunity to do this.

Children make a strong start in early years. Clear expectations and routines help them to settle in quickly. The school provides many opportunities for children to develop their early number and letter knowledge. Children in Nursery are introduced to counting through well-designed learning activities. For example, children confidently count snowflakes and write corresponding numbers to match their counting. Children develop strong learning behaviours and secure key learning in early years. They are very well prepared for their next stage.

Early reading is a priority. Children begin to learn their letter sounds as soon as they start in Nursery. This prepares them well for their phonics in Reception. Trained staff typically teach the school's chosen phonics programme effectively. Pupils' progress is checked and any pupil who needs some extra help is given this. On occasion, the early reading curriculum is not delivered as leaders intend. The teaching approaches used by some staff do not help pupils to learn as well as they could. This means some pupils do not develop their early reading as effectively as they might.

The school's wider curriculum is delivered very effectively. Agreed strategies are used consistently to help pupils learn. Pupils learn the school's 'star words' and key facts and use these to communicate their learning both verbally and in their writing. The knowledge and vocabulary that pupils learn is revisited. This helps pupils to learn and remember the most important content in the curriculum. Pupils develop a depth of knowledge over time. They are well prepared for secondary school.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified accurately. Staff make careful adaptations to meet these needs. For example, pupils who find it difficult to communicate through writing use alternative approaches to share their learning successfully. Pupils' needs are not seen as a barrier to them learning the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. They achieve well.

The school ensures all staff set clear behaviour expectations. Staff model the behaviours they expect. Pupils respond well and behave very well in class. Learning proceeds without disruption. On occasion, more challenging behaviour incidents occur but the school manages these effectively.

The school celebrates strong attendance and makes sure everyone knows its importance. Leaders monitor attendance rigorously and identify any pupil at risk of falling below their expectations. They offer the necessary support and challenge to ensure that pupils attend whenever they can. Pupils attend well and this is improving over time.

The school places great importance on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They develop empathy and respect for other cultures and beliefs. Pupils value and celebrate differences. They speak maturely about healthy relationships and know the importance of having a healthy body and a healthy mind. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Those responsible for governance care deeply about the school. They support and challenge school leaders and know the school's many strengths. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the training they are given to do their jobs well and feel supported around both their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, the approaches used by some staff to teach early reading do not support pupils to learn as well as they could. This means learning does not proceed as effectively as it could. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise to deliver the early reading curriculum effectively.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in November 2017.

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	134958
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10295024
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	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Samantha Moore and Rob Edwards (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Stuart Allen
Website	www.milecrossprimary.com
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one unregistered provider of alternative provision.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, other members of the school leadership team and subject leaders. He also met with a group of school governors.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons in a range of subjects, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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' interest first.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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