

# William Read Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115062
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	378992
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kath Beck

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	388
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sylvia Waymark
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jacqui Gosnold
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Long Road Canvey Island SS8 0JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 683053
<b>Fax number</b>	01268 683345
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@williamread.essex.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 25 lessons taught by 15 teachers and teaching assistants. They also saw eight shorter parts of lessons accompanied by the headteacher. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Discussions were held with a small number of parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school's improvement plan. In addition, inspectors looked at a report from an outside consultant, pupils' work, and attendance records. Inspectors analysed 64 responses to questionnaires from parents and carers. They also analysed questionnaires completed by pupils and members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of questions covering these key areas.

- What factors lie behind the improvement in standards of attainment in Year 2 over the last three years?
- What action is the school taking to stem the decline in standards of attainment in English in Year 6?
- How effective is the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able?

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average school. Most pupils live within the immediate locality. Most come from White British heritage. A very small number are from Indian or Chinese backgrounds, and of these hardly any speak English as an additional language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below that usually found. The percentage identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above the national average. These pupils' needs are linked to autistic spectrum disorder and moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a breakfast club run by the governing body. A privately run pre-school playgroup operates on site, which is inspected separately.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the attainment and progress of pupils in English and in the quality of teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6.

Attainment in mathematics when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 is below average and in English, particularly in writing, it is low. This represents a decline since the last inspection when attainment was judged average. Instability in staffing has interrupted the continuity of pupils' learning in some classes. There is not enough good teaching or good quality feedback in Years 3 to 6 to enable pupils to acquire the skills they need to reach at least the expected or higher levels of attainment. Too few pupils, especially in Year 6, spell correctly, use accurate punctuation and grammar or write with joined handwriting. Expectations are too low and there are very few lessons that provide pupils, in an engaging way, with the important skills they need to write accurately. In lessons in English and mathematics pupils are taught in groups according to their ability. Assessment is not used well enough to match work to pupils' needs within the groups. Questions posed do not challenge pupils' thinking skills, and feedback is insufficient to help them to correct errors and misconceptions. Pupils say they prefer learning mathematics to writing. They find writing difficult, and the topics selected are too narrow and do not always appeal to them.

In contrast, attainment in Year 2 has improved over the last three years and was above the national average in 2011 in reading, writing and mathematics. This is in part due to the improving outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage that are built on successfully in Years 1 and 2. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage establish good habits for learning and acquire secure knowledge of the sounds letters make. This helps them to begin to read and write. Good teaching in most classes in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively. High expectations, good use of resources, and attractive displays in their classrooms help pupils to find the information they need. This enables them to calculate or write independently and confidently. Poems, stories and records of historical events, such as the Great Fire of London, provide pupils with a clear sense of purpose for writing. Mathematical activities are practical and relevant to their lives. Frequent feedback in lessons in these year groups reinforces individuals' learning and

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those of high ability are challenged well.

To stem the deterioration in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, the curriculum has been revised to focus on core skills. Staff have attended training to improve the way in which literacy and mathematics are taught. Expertise from staff in other schools has been shared and has exerted a positive influence on teaching methods in Year 6 in mathematics. A scheme to help pupils join their letters, so that they can write more quickly and complete a greater amount of work has been introduced, but has not been implemented equally well across the school. Where marking is effective, it provides pupils with a clearer idea of their successes and areas for development. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and there are few opportunities for pupils to reflect and act upon their teachers' comments.

Senior leaders, middle managers and the governing body have a clear view about what the school needs to do to improve. Initiatives have been implemented, but these have yet to be monitored fully to check their impact on outcomes for pupils in the older year groups. Data-tracking systems and self-evaluation activities are being used more effectively to track pupils' progress and set targets for improvements in teaching. There has been satisfactory improvement with regard to the key issues since the last inspection. A rising trend in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in the younger classes reflects the school's satisfactory capacity to secure further improvements.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in English by giving them more opportunities to write for a range of purposes and gain pleasure from writing. In doing so:
  - implement a consistent approach to how spelling is taught
  - deepen pupils' understanding of grammar and punctuation so that they can write accurately
  - ensure that pupils develop skills in joining their handwriting so they can write quickly and legibly.
  
- By December 2012, improve the quality of teaching throughout the school so that the large majority of it is good by:
  - improving the way staff ask questions so they challenge and deepen pupils' thinking skills.
  - raising expectations of what pupils can do and providing them with challenging activities
  - making clear to pupils what they are to achieve, especially in their written work
  - providing clear feedback in lessons to correct any misconceptions
  - ensuring that the marking policy is implemented consistently, and that pupils have the opportunity to reflect and act upon the comments made by their teachers.

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- Monitor rigorously the implementation of initiatives to ensure that they are having a positive impact on outcomes for pupils, as shown in their work and levels of attainment.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils say they enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Skills in calculation, spelling, grammar and the use of joined handwriting are mostly taught well in Years 1 and 2. When learning is good, pupils make effective use of resources to apply their developing skills independently and confidently. This is not the case in the older age groups where pupils' weak literacy skills are a barrier to their learning. While there have been improvements in progress in mathematics, improvements in literacy are apparent only for younger pupils. The work of older pupils shows misspellings, the use of print script and uncertainty about when to use upper and lower case letters. Overall progress is inadequate because gaps in pupils' learning widen as they move through the school, and teaching is not good enough to help them to catch up. Pupils do not achieve as they should and are inadequately prepared for the future, since they do not have sufficient skills to communicate confidently, accurately and fluently in writing.

Data show that by Year 6 there is little difference in the performance of boys and girls in English, but boys outperform girls in mathematics. In 2011, too many pupils who had attained expected levels in reading and writing in Year 2 made inadequate progress. Their attainment in Year 6 was low. Individualised and group support for pupils with special educational needs and the more able enable them to make satisfactory progress from their starting points.

In their questionnaires and discussions pupils say they know well how to stay safe, especially when working on the internet. Despite the concerns of some parents, carers and pupils about behaviour, they also say they feel safe in school. During the inspection behaviour in lessons was often good and enabled learning to take place uninterrupted. Pupils know how to live a healthy lifestyle, through their learning in the curriculum, and by participating in break-time games. Provision within the nurture group enhances the emotional well-being of those who attend. Pupils play an appropriate role within the school and community. The school council gives pupils a voice about the changes they wish to make and 'double trouble untanglers' enable them to play happily in the playground. Pupils' knowledge of cultures, faiths and communities very different to their own is developing through visitors to the school and their work with The Royal Opera House.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

**Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

4

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Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

During the inspection the majority of teaching observed in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory and in a few cases it was inadequate. This is not good enough to secure accelerated progress or eradicate underachievement over time and as pupils move through the older classes. In a minority of good lessons in mathematics in Year 6 and in the younger classes, work is matched to pupils' age, interest and abilities. Positive relationships enable them to concentrate and apply themselves to the tasks they have been asked to complete. Effective use of 'talk partners' offers them opportunities to talk through their ideas, to share strategies in mathematics or explore differing views in literacy.

In other lessons, expectations of what pupils can do are too low because teachers do not use assessment rigorously enough to ensure that work is sufficiently challenging for individual pupils. Few staff make clear what pupils are to achieve in their work or extend their thinking. This results in significant errors in their writing that are not corrected. Feedback in lessons is not used well enough to adjust levels of work for individuals who are finding it too hard or too easy.

Following a review, a new curriculum that has the application of key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across subjects at its heart, has been introduced. Pupils' views have been sought to plan themes that interest them. This initiative has yet to be monitored to check that it is matching their needs, interests and aspirations fully. Art, music, personal, social and health education, and a wide range of after-school clubs, visitors to the school and to places of interest add to pupils' enjoyment and broaden their experiences.

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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The school’s care, guidance and support, especially for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are good. Staff work effectively with other professionals to provide support to pupils with specific emotional and behavioural needs. They can point to striking examples of pupils who have been helped to overcome barriers to their learning arising from their particular needs. The good quality provision in the breakfast club and gym trail enables pupils to enjoy a nutritious breakfast, develop coordination skills, and socialise with their friends. Steps taken to improve attendance since the last inspection have been successful. Good arrangements for transition into the Reception classes help children settle into school quickly.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and middle managers are taking the action required to drive their ambitions for the school. They are focusing the school’s efforts to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy through a clear training programme and the implementation of initiatives with regard to the curriculum, teaching methods and marking. This is proving more successful in mathematics than literacy. Through recent robust performance management procedures, staff have personal targets to improve their teaching. They have been made aware of the data that track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and know they are accountable for the achievements of pupils in their class. This is having a successful impact on the outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 2.

Middle leaders, who are specialists in literacy and numeracy, have enhanced their skills in monitoring. Recently they have been allocated more time for this task. This has also contributed to the improvements in the younger classes since the previous inspection three years ago. Teaching is monitored satisfactorily mostly by senior leaders. They occasionally focus on what the teacher is doing rather than the impact of teaching on outcomes for pupils.

The work of the governing body is satisfactory. It supports the school in many aspects of its work. Members of the governing body monitor provision in lessons and concerns raised have been acted upon. Some do not have sufficient knowledge to challenge the school fully over its performance. The provision of a nurture room and employment of teaching assistants to support the learning of different groups are good examples of the school’s inclusive nature. The performance of different groups of pupils is monitored. The governing body is scrupulous in ensuring that pupils, staff

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and volunteers are safeguarded through the application of appropriate policies and training in internet safety. To check these are effective, members of the governing body talk to the pupils to make certain they know how to stay safe. The school contributes to the local community through local musical and inter-school events. It is in the early stages of making links with schools nationally and abroad to deepen pupils’ understanding of life in a diverse society.

The introduction of text messaging, an informative website, and the ‘Parents Council’ to air concerns and contribute to decision-making, have improved communications between parents, carers and the school. Some parents and carers speak highly of the help they have received, while a very small number consider their concerns about their children are not taken fully into account. Expertise gained from other schools has brought about positive changes in teaching methods. Partnerships with welfare groups contribute effectively to the well-being of pupils with particular needs. However, while links with other professionals have brought about improvements in provision, there has been insufficient evaluation of the impact of changes on pupils’ learning and attainment.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Over the past three years outcomes across all the areas of learning for children of this age have improved steadily, although they remain below average. From their starting points children make satisfactory progress. Analysis of data shows that they make the best progress in their personal, social and emotional development, while their skills in communication, language and literacy are low. To raise attainment in this area of learning staff provide good opportunities through role-play, circle time and the use of ‘talk partners’, for children to develop their vocabulary and explore

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their ideas. Children are polite, take turns and listen carefully to each other. Habits of good learning are established quickly. Short daily sessions enable children to learn the sounds letters make and try to apply them in engaging activities such as writing a letter to Santa Claus. Story time helps them to understand that the words on a page have meaning.

Children are encouraged to be active while learning and to enjoy solving problems. The challenge to put numbered Christmas stockings in order from 0-10 caused much excitement, especially when it was discovered that the number 10 had gone missing. Children had to find it later in the day as it was hiding somewhere in the classroom. Outside, they enjoy riding on wheeled toys, climbing and balancing and this promotes their physical development effectively. Outdoor provision to promote the other areas of learning is dependent on the weather.

There is a happy atmosphere because children behave very well and relationships between the children and the adults are trusting. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff are enthusiastic and keen to learn from their colleagues. However, they do not always make the most of opportunities for learning presented in children’s play. Home visits and the involvement of parents and carers in tracking children’s progress are helping with the planning for the next steps in their learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Sixteen per cent of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. This is a much smaller proportion than usually found. A very small number of parents and carers added comments to their questionnaires. While the majority of parents and carers who responded support the school, they expressed concerns about the management of behaviour. While no inappropriate behaviour was observed during the inspection, the school acknowledges that some pupils find it hard to behave well. It has established a nurture group to enable these pupils to understand the consequences of their behaviour, its impact on others, and how to take responsibility for their actions.

Some parents and carers did not consider the school to be well-led and managed. They did not explain their reasons for this view. While the inspection found the leadership and management to be satisfactory overall, there were areas of

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inadequacy within it, and these are reported above. Other parents raised concerns that their children are taught too often by teaching assistants leading to interruptions to their child's learning. Inspection evidence identified the inadequate quality of teaching in some areas of the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Read Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 388 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	50	28	44	4	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	48	28	44	4	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	20	31	35	55	7	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	33	34	53	7	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	30	39	61	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	21	33	38	59	5	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	31	41	64	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	28	33	52	3	5	1	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	33	35	55	4	6	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	28	31	48	6	9	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	23	34	53	5	8	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	17	27	31	48	12	19	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	21	33	37	58	4	6	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



9 December 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of William Read Primary School, Canvey Island, SS8 0JE**

Thank you for giving us a warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed listening to you sing both in school and on your CD of Christmas carols. We also enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views about the school. You told us you feel safe and you know how to be healthy. We thought you behaved well during our visit, but you mentioned in your questionnaires and when we met with you that you wished behaviour was a lot better.

During our visit we discovered those of you who are in the older classes are not making as much progress as you should be, especially in writing. This is because not all teaching helps you to develop good skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation and joined handwriting so that you can communicate well in your writing. As a result, we have given the school a 'notice to improve'. Those in charge of your school know what they need to do to help you to improve your learning. Inspectors will visit to see if the changes we have asked the grown-ups to make are helping you to do well.

We have asked all the grown-ups to:

- help you to enjoy writing more by making sure you have the skills to write well
- ask you questions and provide work that makes you think hard
- give you more information about how you can do your best work
- point out what you do well and correct you when you have not understood what you are being taught
- give you time to think about the comments your teachers make when marking your work so you know what to do better in your next piece of work
- check that you really do benefit from the changes they make to your lessons.

We know that you will all help your school to be better as you attend frequently and want to do as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Kath Beck  
Lead inspector

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