

# Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115109
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	379004
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Saunders

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	399
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Hayman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mike Walsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Docwra Road Kelvedon CO5 9DS
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	26–27 September 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	379004

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body, and inspectors spoke to pupils and parents and carers informally. They looked at pupils' work in lessons, teachers' records and the school's systems to track pupils' progress. Inspectors reviewed school policies, procedures and records of leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning, as well as minutes from meetings, the school improvement priorities, and questionnaires received from 141 parents and carers, as well as responses from staff and pupils.

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

- Has the achievement of pupils returned to previous levels, particularly in writing?
- Have strategies to improve teaching been effective and are these implemented consistently?
- How effectively has the curriculum been adapted, particularly to provide challenge for the most-able pupils?
- How well is the vision for the school shared and how effective is the new leadership team at identifying and bringing about improvements?

## Information about the school

Located in the village of Kelvedon, St Mary's School is larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. Pupils are almost all from White British heritage; a very few pupils come from a range of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Needs include moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disabilities and physical disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Reception classes; these now have a single intake at the beginning of the academic year. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and the Silver award for eco-schools. A new headteacher took up post in January 2010. There is a privately run pre-school on the school site; this is subject to a separate inspection.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Since the last inspection, the leadership of the school has been through a period of transition. Together with the senior leadership team, the new headteacher has quickly gained an accurate view of the school and brought about considerable changes to improve the learning environment, develop teaching and consequently raise achievement.

- Efforts to raise achievement have been conspicuously successful; attainment is now above average in both English and mathematics. Attainment in writing has been a focus and has risen considerably. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests is above average.
- Pupils make good progress across the school. Those who are more able are given additional challenge, for example by working with older pupils or doing work beyond the requirements of the curriculum, and they make good progress.
- Senior leaders and teachers monitor the progress of groups of pupils carefully. Where differences have been identified, the school has put in place appropriate strategies to ensure all pupils make the progress they should. For example, the progress of boys in writing has been a focus; they now make similar progress to their peers.
- Responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning is increasingly shared well and staff reflect on what is working well and what could be even better; this has developed a culture of continuous improvement.
- Pupils enjoy being at school thoroughly; they say that teachers make learning fun. Consequently, their attendance is high and they participate well in lessons.
- At times, pupils are too dependent on teachers to provide the challenge they need. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves about how they can develop their learning, but this is not yet the case consistently.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they feel very safe. They have a good grasp of what situations might be risky and know what they can do to help keep themselves safe.
- There is a strong emphasis on staying healthy and pupils respond enthusiastically to this. Most pupils participate avidly in a wide range of sports and greatly enjoy the activities that the extensive playing areas allow.
- Most parents and carers are highly supportive of the changes that have been brought about and find the headteacher and staff approachable and quick to respond to concerns. As one parent said, 'I have been delighted with the education that my children have received. St Mary's is moving with the times

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where more focus is on the learner'. Another said 'My children talk vividly about school at home – I think that says a lot'.

- While pupils are well aware of their own beliefs and able to think deeply about moral dilemmas, they are not as well aware of the beliefs and lifestyles of those who are different from themselves, particularly within the United Kingdom. Although they study other religions and cultures, they have few opportunities to interact with such pupils.

The key issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed effectively. Leaders at all levels accurately evaluate the work of the school. The school has good capacity to bring about and sustain improvements, as is demonstrated by the rise in achievement, improvements in teaching and the curriculum, and the well-informed support of the governing body.

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

- Promote greater independence in all pupils so that they challenge themselves about ways they can develop their learning.
- Raise the awareness of pupils about the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom by:
  - providing opportunities for pupils to interact with others different from themselves
  - enabling pupils to identify ways they can contribute to the wider community.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

When they join the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have a broad range of skills and knowledge; overall the levels are similar to those expected for their age, although some children are particularly skilled in communication, language and literacy, and in using numbers. By the end of Year 6, the very large majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points in mathematics and English. In national tests, a small minority of Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress in writing; new strategies and curriculum developments are improving this rapidly. For example, the use of digital recorders helps pupils speak good sentences before writing, and teachers use interesting visits and topics to help pupils write from their personal experience. Year 1 pupils enjoyed particularly writing down further questions for Goldilocks, following an interview with her. Year 6 pupils were sensitively engaged when considering how children and their parents and carers would have felt when being evacuated from London during World War 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, both by the well-informed adults around them and through partnerships the school has developed, for example, to train staff to support those with specific disabilities. As a result, those pupils make good progress.

Pupils can identify situations which may be unsafe, but understand how to minimise

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the risks to themselves, for example when using the internet. Behaviour is at least good and is often exemplary. Occasionally, when the pace of lessons slows, a very few pupils find it difficult to maintain their focus. Pupils were clear that bullying is very rare and any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. They feel there are many adults they could talk to if they are worried. Older pupils have good opportunities to be positive role models; for example, the equipment for break-times is organised impressively by the 'PlayPals', who help younger pupils during lunchtime. Pupils get along amicably and are proud to be part of their school. The Eco-team and school council play important roles in identifying issues and have helped to bring about valuable improvements. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural matters. Pupils respond respectfully during such times and demonstrate a sense of wonder about the interesting things they learn about the world around them. They enjoy raising money for a range of charities and have appreciated opportunities to meet with pupils from other schools. While those occasions provide them with some opportunities to widen their view of the world, their understanding of the diversity of cultures, particularly within the United Kingdom, is more limited.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching has improved because of well-focused training, the increased use of assessment in lessons and the use of targets, following senior leaders' monitoring. In particular, the strategies have had a good impact on writing. Teachers identify and share best practice with each other. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and

<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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thorough planning, informed by accurate information about how well individuals are doing, means that tasks are matched well to pupils’ needs. In the best examples, the most-able pupils are enabled to get on with their work early, without having to sit through explanations they understand already. That allows teachers to match their explanations more closely to the remaining pupils’ needs. At times, pupils are not given sufficient freedom to explore their own learning and come up with new challenges to extend their thinking. Sometimes, pupils mark one another’s work and receive helpful comments from teachers’ marking. Pupils are expected increasingly to respond to the marking, which is helping to consolidate their progress. The use of themes to plan the curriculum has helped to make work relevant and give it meaning. That enables teachers to plan exciting learning opportunities and they have been given a ‘licence to thrill’, displayed in each classroom. The curriculum is enriched further through themed days, such as the Serendipity Day and Aspiration Day, which help to develop pupils’ personal skills. Skills in information and communication technology are well developed because a wide range of software is available, chosen carefully to support the themes and learning needs of pupils. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to choose to use their skills to produce their own work. There is a wide range of popular clubs and activities for pupils to choose from, including sports, music and art.

The great dedication of the staff fosters the good care, support and guidance that pupils receive. Pupils are known well as individuals. That is modelled by the headteacher and senior leaders and pupils feel that their voice is heard about matters that are important to them. As a consequence of their good personal development and strong skills in speaking and listening, pupils are very confident when chatting to adults and made it clear they appreciate the changes that have been brought about to improve their opportunities. Arrangements at times of transition have been reviewed and the school continues to work to make these even more effective. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Since his appointment, the headteacher has quickly established an accurate view of the school and developed a strong vision, backed by sound plans to bring this about. Aply supported by his senior leaders, he has implemented impressive improvements

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to the buildings and ensured that teaching has improved, informed by best practice elsewhere. There is a strong sense of partnership among the staff; they value particularly the training that has been undertaken and the vision for the school is widely shared. New staff are supported well through robust induction arrangements which mean that they become part of the team quickly. Governance is good. The governing body brings a wide range of useful skills to support the school and it seeks out appropriate training to help it understand its responsibilities. It has been active in developing the wider vision for the school, being informed well by visits and discussions with stakeholders. It ensures that it fulfils its statutory duties and challenges the school where appropriate, to maintain the focus on providing the best possible opportunities for the pupils.

Safeguarding is given the highest priority. Routines and procedures are reviewed regularly. Personal safety programmes include Bikeability, swimming, road safety and internet safety. There are well-established systems to keep track of how well pupils are doing. They are used to evaluate carefully any groups who may be vulnerable to underachievement and ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity. The school identifies and tackles any discrimination and helps pupils to appreciate the contributions of all their peers. The school ensures that there are good opportunities for parents and carers to receive information about their children and about learning. A recent initiative to help parents and carers understand how mathematics is taught, for example, is proving successful and was well regarded by the parents and carers who attended. The school seeks out beneficial partnerships, for example, to challenge more-able pupils and to develop enterprise skills. The school makes a good contribution to developing community cohesion in the local community, although this is not as well developed in relation to the national community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good arrangements before they start at the school mean that children settle in very quickly. As one child said to his parent, 'Don't worry about me; I've been here before'. Well-established routines and systems to record observations help adults to get to know the needs of the children quickly. At times, adults step in to help children too soon without allowing them the time to develop their learning and independence. Staff recognise that some of the children have skills and knowledge which are well above the levels expected for their age, and are creative in finding ways to ensure these children are also supported. For example, some children enjoyed learning and working with large numbers. Children make good progress; by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills and knowledge are usually above average levels. The staff have reflected on how to ensure time is used most beneficially and implemented appropriate changes to enable this to happen. There is a good emphasis on using the interests of the children to provide further, engaging opportunities to learn. Good leadership ensures that children are kept safe because policies and procedures are kept up to date, adults are well trained and the environment is well maintained. The children's learning is shared with their parents and carers, for example, through the learning journals which children and adults develop together. Parents and carers appreciate the opportunities to be involved in their children's learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires received by the inspection team was broadly average. The views of parents and carers were very largely positive in most of the aspects and particularly high regarding the statement that their children enjoy school. However, a small minority did not agree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that there is a good variety of ways in which parents and carers can participate and contribute their views and that a large majority of parents and carers felt that they were able to take advantage of these opportunities. The school continues to investigate further ways in which to hear and understand the views of parents and carers. A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school is well led and managed. Comments indicate that some of these parents and carers do not agree with some of the changes that the headteacher has made. However, other comments praise the changes profusely, recognising that the headteacher has taken some brave and

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appropriate decisions, which they may not have agreed with initially, but subsequently realised were the right decisions. The pupils said that they appreciate the changes that have been implemented; their responses to the pupil questionnaire and comments to inspectors support this, showing that they like being at school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England 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 141 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 399 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	60	55	39	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	99	70	37	26	2	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	48	34	77	55	12	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	29	77	55	20	14	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	33	82	58	5	4	2	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	61	43	66	47	13	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	42	73	52	6	4	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)	55	39	63	45	13	9	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	46	33	74	52	16	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	25	77	55	14	10	9	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	20	71	50	23	16	9	6
The school is led and managed effectively	49	35	54	38	20	14	7	5
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	66	47	57	40	12	9	2	1

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.**

28 September 2011

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England Primary School,  
Kelvedon, CO5 9DS**

Thank you for talking to us so enthusiastically when we visited your school and showing us the work you were doing. Many of you said how much you enjoy being at school, because teachers make learning fun. We could see you enjoyed your lessons, and you get along with one another very well. We have judged that your school is a good school. These are some of the things we found out about it.

- You do well in your tests at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. That is because you have made good progress through the school.
- Those of you who find learning easier are challenged to do even harder work, because the teachers give you tasks that are suitable for you and sometimes let you get on with your work early. Those of you who find learning more difficult are supported well and adults help you to make good progress.
- You said you feel very safe, because there is always someone you can talk to if you are worried and you know they will do something about it. You also know what you can do to help keep yourselves safe, for example, on the internet.
- You told us you like the changes the headteacher and other leaders have made, and feel that the headteacher listens to you. The headteacher and other leaders make sure they know how well you are doing and have improved teaching and the school buildings.
- You said that pupils get along with each other and we could see this from the way you played together. We were impressed with how active you are on the playground and the many clubs you like participating in. You know a lot about how to stay healthy, and are good ambassadors for this.
- You have good opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as the PlayPals, school council and Eco-team, and enjoy helping others.

Although it is a good school, the headteacher and other adults are finding ways to make it even better. We have asked the school to help you to be more independent, particularly in coming up with your own ideas about how you would like to learn. You all can help by trying your best first before asking an adult to help you. We have also asked the school to help you learn more about other people who have different beliefs and lifestyles.

Yours sincerely  
Andrew Saunders  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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