

St Mary's, Prittlewell, CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115145
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	379019
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	Mary Summers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Celia Tyler
Headteacher	Frances Neil
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2006
School address	Boston Avenue Southend-on-Sea SS2 6JH
Telephone number	01702 354012
Fax number	01702 354016
Email address	office@st-marysprittlewell.southend.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	22–23 March 2012
Inspection number	379019



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
 Textphone: 0161 618 8524
 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Mary Summers

Additional inspector

Gillian Bosschaert

Additional inspector

David Hatchett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 21 lessons taught by 14 teachers and talked with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and other information about pupils' progress, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of their work. The inspectors scrutinised the school's improvement plans as well as the curriculum and teachers' planning for lessons. The responses to the 147 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with those submitted by staff and pupils, were taken into account.

Information about the school

Most pupils who attend this larger-than-average primary school come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average. Many of these have moderate learning difficulties. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has gained a number of awards in recent years, including the International Schools award and has acquired Healthy Schools status.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not good because teaching and pupils' achievement are not yet good. The school provides a warm and nurturing environment for pupils in which they develop good levels of respect and care for one another. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, key weaknesses in teaching have not been tackled robustly enough to secure better progress by pupils.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. School records and work in pupils' books shows that progress in writing is slower than in reading and mathematics. A new strategy for teaching writing has been implemented which is beginning to have a positive impact, especially in Years 1 and 2, where pupils' attainment is beginning to rise.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall but where it is good pupils are thoroughly engaged by the teachers' enthusiastic presentation and motivated by a range of exciting and challenging activities. Too much of the teaching is satisfactory however and results in pupils being passive in their learning and not making as much progress.
- Behaviour, safety and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident and attendance rates are above average. There are good systems to support the effective management of behaviour which ensures pupils' learning is seldom interrupted.
- Senior leaders manage teachers' performance satisfactorily. They have rightly identified some of the weaknesses in teaching and other aspects of provision. Development plans often lack clarity however, and training and advice for staff have not always been followed up with enough rigour to ensure more rapid improvement.
- Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a

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

monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing by the end of the autumn term 2012 by:
 - providing pupils with more planned opportunities to write in different subjects
 - using targets more effectively to ensure that pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning.
- Improve teaching by the end of the summer term 2012, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make full use of information gained about pupils' progress to plan activities that challenge pupils at different levels
 - ensuring an appropriate balance of time in lessons for teachers to talk and for pupils to work independently
 - ensuring that learning intentions are clear and regularly referred to during lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by the end of the summer term 2012 by:
 - monitoring teaching more rigorously with a clear focus on the impact on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that school improvement plans always contain clear measures of success and interim benchmarks by which to judge progress towards intended outcomes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires stated that they thought their children were making good progress. Overall, inspection findings show that attainment is satisfactory as is progress over time. Most children start in Reception at levels that are broadly in line with those expected for their age although their attainment in communication, language and literacy is often below those typically expected of four-year-olds. By the end of the year, they reach levels that are broadly as expected for their age, although they reach higher levels in literacy because of the school's successful focus on this area. The picture is similar at the end of Key Stage 1, where pupils' average attainment is beginning to rise. Most pupils in Year 2 are developing a secure understanding of letters and sounds and are able to use them successfully to read new words.

By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. Inspection evidence, including the school's tracking data, shows that pupils make satisfactory progress between Reception and Year 5, and good progress in Year 6. In an

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

outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils eagerly calculated the area of irregular shapes on a design for a garden. They worked extremely well in pairs, sharing ideas and previous knowledge of mathematical formulae, using modern technology to help them find new formulae where necessary. Pupils in Year 6 are keen readers. They are eager to talk about their favourite authors and show empathy towards characters. In other year groups, pupils are often passive in their learning and lack real engagement and motivation in their tasks.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support in class and in small groups to help them develop their confidence and fluency. They make satisfactory progress. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also make satisfactory progress. Many disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in Key Stage 2 are hindered by insecure basic skills. However, the school has successfully implemented a range of support before and during the school day, including individualised programs using computers, which are helping pupils to fill these gaps in their learning.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers believe their children to be well taught and most pupils agree. Teaching is satisfactory with a small amount of good and outstanding teaching, especially in Year 6. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to explain new concepts and answer pupils' questions. They manage behaviour well so that pupils' learning is not disrupted. In the best lessons, the teachers involve pupils for the maximum amount of time in their learning. Expectations are high and are clearly explained so that pupils know exactly what to do to succeed. Teachers make sure that pupils understand what they are learning and what they have to do to succeed. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils evaluated each other's writing against specific criteria, to help them understand exactly what constituted high-level non-fiction writing. They went on to edit their work against their individual targets for improvement.

Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils spend too much time listening to teachers, rather than being actively engaged in learning. Often, the expectations of what pupils will learn during the lesson are unclear and this hinders their involvement and progress. Teachers make ongoing assessments about pupils' progress but seldom use this information to plan activities which help individual pupils move on in their learning. Too often the tasks set are the same for all pupils, with teaching assistants deployed to help disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, complete them. More able pupils often waste time repeating work they can already do.

A range of strategies have been introduced to support better learning by pupils but these are not yet being implemented consistently by all teachers. For example, target-setting procedures and new marking guidelines are implemented well in Year 6 but this is not always the case in other year groups.

Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive and support pupils' growing

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

confidence. Time is provided for them to reflect on their thoughts, ideas and concerns. This promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Year 3 pupils considered the links they had with different countries while Year 4 pupils wrote sensitive and occasionally very ambitious New Year's resolutions at the beginning of the term. The planned curriculum has a satisfactory and sometimes good impact on teaching. For example, pupils' work in pottery helps them to develop their creativity and imagination as well as secure skills in working with clay.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost all pupils, parents and carers say that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school, although a few also say that there is occasional bullying. Behaviour is typically good. Behaviour in classrooms, around the school and in the playground is positive. Pupils listen and cooperate well in lessons although sometimes lose concentration if they are not actively enough involved in learning. However, they seldom disrupt others' work and take an active responsibility in supporting one another's behaviour, for example, reminding those who forget about the rules for walking in corridors. Year 6 pupils show excellent attitudes to learning and perseverance and initiative when solving problems. The school is an inclusive community and its efforts over time with pupils who have behavioural difficulties have been very effective. Several pupils with particular behaviour problems have responded well to the school's carefully organised support and, as a result, are now behaving more appropriately and making increased progress. Attendance has improved and continues to be above average.

All of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe that the school keeps their children safe and most are happy about the school's response to bullying. Pupils are extremely clear about the different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and that based on sexuality, and spoke confidently about how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using mobile phones. They understand what to watch out for so that they can help others who may be victims of bullying.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders have a clear school vision based on raising attainment. Satisfactory self-evaluation ensures they have a broad idea of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Areas for improvement are picked up appropriately but plans lack sharp and measureable success criteria and clear benchmarks to help leaders assess how effectively their actions are affecting pupil outcomes. The management of teaching is satisfactory. Senior leaders observe lessons regularly and provide teachers with verbal and written feedback. However, in the past, this has not been followed up rigorously enough to ensure that recommendations have been carried out. There are clear links between the analysis of teachers' performance and their professional development opportunities, linked to identified school priorities for development. The tracking system identifies underachievement appropriately and is used as a tool to drive improvement by senior leaders. As a result, teachers are being held increasingly accountable for the progress that pupils make.

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

The areas for improvement from the last inspection have been tackled satisfactorily. Pupils' attainment in writing has improved although still lags behind reading and mathematics. Target-setting procedures remain inconsistent across the school because teachers' use of these has not been monitored carefully enough. Gaps in attainment amongst different groups of pupils are narrow; equal opportunities are promoted well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum and value their membership of a variety of extra-curricular clubs. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Policies are regularly reviewed and links with parents and carers are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and makes a good contribution to school improvement because members have a good knowledge of the school and the locality. The school meets safeguarding requirements.

The school has recently reviewed its curriculum and teachers are trialling new units this year. The curriculum is satisfactory although there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. Many pupils participate in the wide range of activities on offer outside the school day, such as football, chess and sewing. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through links with the neighbouring church and the local football club.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's, Prittlewell, CofE Primary School, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6JH

Thank you for giving us your views about the school when we came to visit you recently. We enjoyed looking in your books, reading your questionnaires and watching you in your lessons. This helped us to get to know your school. It provides you with a satisfactory education and these are some of the things we liked best:

- You enjoy coming to school and taking part in the many clubs and activities that adults organise for you during and outside the school day.
- Your school has good links with the local church and other local organisations which help you learn how to be a good citizen.
- You know what bullying is, and you say you are confident to speak to an adult.
- Your behaviour is good and you come to school regularly.
- You look after each other well and always help out if someone has a problem.

To make it even better we have asked the school to:

- help you all achieve better results in writing by providing opportunities for you to practise your literacy skills in other subjects and ensuring you all know your individual targets, especially in writing
- plan lessons with clear expectations about what you are going to be learning
- provide enough time in lessons for you to work independently
- make sure teachers use information about your work to improve your progress
- make sure that the headteacher and deputy headteacher plan carefully to help the school improve further and keep a close check on what is happening in lessons to see that you are making enough progress.

You all can play your part in helping your school become even better by always working hard.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**