

The Mayflower Primary School

Main Road, Dovercourt, Harwich, CO12 4AJ

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher is an outstanding leader. He demonstrates exceptionally high expectations for the school and has inspired staff and pupils alike to achieve their full potential. In one year he has turned a failing school into an exciting and vibrant place where learning is valued by everyone.
- The quality of leadership and management at all levels is outstanding. Leaders monitor rigorously and frequently. They know how well pupils are doing and take immediate action if any pupil is falling behind.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an excellent approach to developing teaching skills. They coach all staff, explaining clearly what is good about their work and precisely how to improve it.
- Teaching in many classes is inspirational. Because of this pupils love coming to school and love learning. As a result their progress is consistently at least good and often outstanding.
- Most pupils now at least reach the standards expected nationally for English and mathematics throughout the school, and this year most are on track to exceed them. This represents a dramatic improvement in pupils' achievement over the last year.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are polite and courteous towards all adults and each other. They take a huge pride in their work and in their school.
- The governors are highly knowledgeable about the school. They keep every aspect of the school's work under sharp scrutiny and know precisely when to be supportive and when to be challenging.
- The school does not stop thinking about how it can get even better. Every initiative is focused on improving pupils' achievement to make sure they are ready for the next stage in their education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 20 lessons, including two joint observations with senior leaders. Short visits were made to other lessons as part of additional observations around the school.
- Inspectors observed assembly, break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils across the age range to talk about achievement, teaching, behaviour, safety and improvements in the school. Inspectors spoke to parents bringing their children to school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and other leaders, and the teaching staff. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a group of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- By the end of the inspection there had been 27 responses to Parent View. Inspectors also looked at the school's own survey of parents' views.
- Inspectors listened to pupils of different abilities reading.
- Inspectors checked the school's records of attainment and progress, lesson monitoring documents and teachers' performance management records. They also looked at the school's figures for attendance and exclusion. They checked safeguarding, child protection and behaviour records. They also checked the records of governing body meetings and notes of governors' visits to the school. They looked at how the school plans to improve even more.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Ladner

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- At the previous inspection in September 2012, the school was placed in special measures because it was failing to give pupils an acceptable standard of education. Inspectors visited the school twice after this to monitor its progress. The school was reinspected in October 2013. Between these two inspections there have been changes in leadership and teaching staff. An interim headteacher ran the school from September 2012 and was appointed as permanent headteacher in July 2013.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils come from homes where English is not the first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported through pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- This outstanding school has no significant weaknesses but is already planning to build on its achievements by:
 - recording in detail exactly how so much has been achieved so quickly, so this continues to inform planning for further improvement
 - developing teachers into outstanding leaders and managers, including by sharing expertise with other schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Since the last inspection results have improved dramatically, and the local authority's data show that the children achieved better than other schools in the local area and county.
- Children start in the Reception classes with levels of skills and understanding that are about the same as other children of their age. The good assessment carried out soon after they start school means that if any need extra help, they get this quickly. For example, last year teachers recognised that boys needed more help than girls to work and play together well. A programme of support was put in place immediately. As a result by the end of the year there was virtually no gap between boys and girls in their personal development.
- In 2012 national data showed significant improvement in the attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1. The school's data show that this has improved again in 2013 for all groups of pupils. Pupils also make good and sometimes outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The 2013 Year 1 check on phonics (the sounds that letters make) showed a marked improvement.
- The school's data also show a dramatic improvement in attainment in Year 6 in 2013. For the first time the school has exceeded the government's floor standards. This is because all groups of pupils made outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In the deputy headteacher's words, 'Last year we smashed the gap between all pupils and those eligible for pupil premium!' This is an outstanding achievement and down to the excellent teaching they received.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and higher ability pupils also make good and sometimes outstanding progress in Years 2 and 6.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress. This is due to the excellent leadership, high expectations and good training of all adults who work with the children. Although activities are well planned and developed inside the classroom, teachers have realised that they need to give more consideration to learning outside the classroom. This is already in hand.
- The school has good links with local nurseries and pre-schools. Home visits are combined with detailed professional discussion about children's development before they start school to make sure all children's learning and development needs are met. Good teaching of phonics has contributed to the better Year 1 phonic test results.
- There is a strong focus on the teaching of reading throughout the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils use their phonic skills well to help them read words, and by Year 6 all pupils read widely and develop a real love of books.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is never less than good and a high proportion is outstanding. This is why pupils have made such rapid progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- All teachers show that they have exceptionally high expectations for what pupils can achieve in

lessons and excellent subject knowledge. They plan work very carefully so it gives enough challenge to make all groups of pupils think and learn better. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2 the attention to detail was extraordinary. Every group had a different task that was exceptionally well planned to move their thinking and learning forward.

- Teachers assess pupils' learning throughout the lesson. Every so often they will ask everyone to stop and listen so they can find out how well things are going. Teachers use this information to give extra support then and there as well as plan for their next lesson. They give good attention to pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- The teaching of skills in English and mathematics is often inspirational. For example, inspectors were surprised to see all Year 3 and 4 dressed in white overalls. They had taken on the role of forensic scientists in a crime scene so they could write a detailed report of what they found there. The outcomes of this experience were exceptional in terms of the quality of pupils' thinking and writing.
- Good and outstanding teaching are also evident in the small group support pupils receive to boost their skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in a mathematics group two pupils were able to work at a higher level on their algebra skills. They made outstanding progress because the teacher helped them to think about mistakes and correct them themselves.
- Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to all lessons. They use open questions to find out exactly what pupils know and encourage them to think problems through for themselves.
- All classrooms are wonderful places to learn. Wall displays celebrate children's best work. They are also used to give help and reminders of important information that pupils can refer to during lessons to help them with their work.
- Marking is detailed and very practical, focusing on 'what went well' and 'even better if.' As a result all pupils know exactly why their work is good and precisely what they need to do to improve it. They are given time to read and comment on teachers' marking, and to respond by improving their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils cannot wait to get into school when the gates open. The headteacher greets every child and parent with smiles and encouragement and the school day continues in this vein. As a result all pupils feel valued and respond by respecting all adults they work with and each other.
- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary because the activities are so interesting and grab pupils' imagination and attention. There are excellent relationships between teachers and support staff and pupils. This sets an example that pupils follow in their friendships on the playground and around the school. For example, lunch time in the dining room is a quiet buzz of conversation.
- Pupils feel safe in their school because they are kind and thoughtful towards each other. They know about different types of bullying and say they can talk to an adult if there is any kind of name-calling. The headteacher deals rapidly and effectively with any incidents of bullying, including homophobic bullying. Parents are very pleased with this and say any concerns they have a dealt with immediately.

- Attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools. It has improved because pupils love school so much. The school is working hard to deal with the very few cases of persistent absence.

The leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher gives exceptional leadership to the school. He took on the post of interim headteacher, returning from retirement to help the local authority with a failing school. He has worked hard with demoralised staff, and built their confidence so that all believe in their ability to provide the best possible education for all pupils. He has transformed the school into a colourful, welcoming place where children love to learn and improve their learning.
- The deputy headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. She has worked with subject leaders and phase leaders and developed them into an outstanding team who know how to bring about excellent teaching and learning in the year groups they lead. All have an excellent understanding of pupils' progress and are a formidable force for school improvement.
- The impact of this excellent leadership team is that teachers and support staff know what is expected of them. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an excellent understanding of how to coach teachers so they understand what good learning looks like and can make this happen in their classes. Teachers welcome the challenging targets they are given to improve pupils' achievement in their class because they want to give the best possible education to their pupils.
- The school uses the additional funding it receives to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium exceptionally well. As a result all pupils eligible to receive this funding make good or outstanding progress in every class.
- The school has made suitable plans to use the additional sports funding it recently received. There is already a high participation rate in sport and the additional funding will be targeted to increase this. The school has reintroduced swimming lessons for all pupils, and feels this is particularly important in a coastal town. Pupils and governors were involved in deciding how this additional money will be used.
- The curriculum offers exciting learning opportunities for all pupils. The school is already planning for the new national curriculum. All subjects are included, some being integrated into topics like the current superhero topic in Year 2 where pupils constructed their superhero puppet as a design technology activity, writing the instruction for how to do this in English lessons. The summer holiday project about the Tudors helps pupils in Key Stage 2 to maintain their interest and inspiration for learning during the summer holiday.
- The curriculum includes good opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural awareness and understanding. Excellent spiritual development is evident in pupils' ability to reflect on their learning, and their outstanding social and moral development can be seen in how they work and play so well together.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and take an active part in school improvement through their role on the governing body and through the 'parent voice' group.
- The local authority has given good support to the school through a local commissioner and through the appointment of additional governors.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the school’s work, including data about pupils’ achievement. Governors are fully involved in improvement planning. The new Chair and local authority governor have supported and driven forward this understanding with great enthusiasm. Established governors have been inspired by their encouragement and commitment to school improvement. As a result all the governors visit the school and ask searching questions about why things are organised as they are and how money is being spent. School leaders are given well-informed challenge, and also support when this is needed. All the governors have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how to target pupil premium funding so it makes the best possible impact on pupils’ learning. Their success is evident in the excellent outcomes these pupils achieve.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114747
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	420519

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Hill
Headteacher	Tony Coppin
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2012
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