

# The Mayflower Primary School

Main Road, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex CO12 4AJ

## Inspection dates

23–24 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has declined considerably. Pupils' achievement has not been good enough for several years for the school to remain outstanding.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in lower key stage 2. Consequently, pupils have too much to catch up on in Years 5 and 6.
- Not enough pupils reach the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Leaders and governors do not use the additional funds well enough to help more disadvantaged pupils meet or exceed the expected standard at the end of key stages.
- The quality of teaching in science is not good enough. Pupils do not receive activities that allow them to reach the standards expected by the national curriculum.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan learning that meets the needs of pupils in their class.
- Learning support assistants are not used as well as they should be to accelerate the progress that pupils make.
- Boys do not achieve as well as girls in early years. Not enough reach a good level of development.
- Leaders' plans are not sharp enough to measure the impact of their actions on systematically improving pupils' achievement.
- Governors have not held school leaders well enough to account for the quality of education.
- Pupils do not have enough to occupy them during less structured times such as lunchtime.

### The school has the following strengths

- New senior leadership has halted the decline. They are bringing about rapid improvement and know the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- New approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is helping pupils make good progress in upper key stage 2.
- Staff are proud to work at the school. They have welcomed the many changes this year to improve the school.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They respond well to adults and show they want to learn.
- Leaders place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Pupils say they feel safe.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is closer to the national average.
- Children are happy and well looked after in the early years classes. The outdoor area is well resourced.

## Full report

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

- Improve pupils' achievement by:
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in reading by the end of key stage 2 so it is at least in line with the national average
  - accelerating the progress pupils make in lower key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the phonics screening check so that it is consistently in line with or better than the national average
  - ensuring that more disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress so they can reach and exceed the required standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
  - ensuring that more pupils meet the required standard in science at all key stages.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers use assessment more precisely to plan work that meets the needs of groups of pupils
  - the quality of teaching improves in science to meet the expectations of the national curriculum
  - learning support assistants are used more effectively and consistently in classes to have an impact on accelerating the progress pupils make.
- Improve the quality of early years by providing more opportunities for boys to reach a good level of development in reading, writing and mathematics so they are better prepared for Year 1.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - sharpening the focus of school improvement plans so leaders and governors can monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions on systematically increasing pupils' achievements
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum, especially in science.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school was previously graded as outstanding and therefore exempt from routine inspections. However, since that time, leaders and governors have not ensured that pupils have made sufficient progress from their starting points. The school meets the definition of a coasting school. This year, new senior leadership is having a positive impact on increasing pupils' achievement. They have halted the decline.
- Leaders and governors have not used additional funds effectively to improve the progress that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make. They have not identified and reduced barriers to learning well enough over a long period of time. This year, leaders have identified more appropriate ways to allocate the funds. The impact of their work on increasing the progress that disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make is in the early stages.
- Leaders' effective use of performance management and professional development, until this year, has not been good enough. Consequently, some adults do not have the required subject knowledge of the current national curriculum to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. This is particularly the case in subjects such as science. This year, training and professional development have been given a high priority and staff welcome the high-quality support and challenge they now receive.
- The curriculum provision covers the subjects expected in the national curriculum. However, leaders recognise that the teaching of subjects such as science and history is not interesting and exciting enough for all pupils to make good or better progress. Firm plans are in place for leaders to introduce improved provision from September 2018.
- The new headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They have made great strides in addressing the inconsistent quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics. However, improvement plans lack sharp and precise interim targets so that governors can hold leaders to account and monitor how systematically and effectively leaders are increasing all pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders have demonstrated their capacity for improvement in a very short space of time. Staff spoken with during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive and proud to work at the school. One member of staff echoed the sentiment of many in saying, 'We have had strong leadership from September. There is more consistency in the improvements and especially in expectations of behaviour.'
- The recently appointed coordinator for SEN and/or disabilities has improved how pupils are identified as having additional or special educational needs. Some pupils are no longer included on the SEN register as a result. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of this work on accelerating the progress that vulnerable pupils make.
- The effect of middle leadership is still new. Middle leaders have action plans in place and are keen to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Leadership for the suitable use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is becoming increasingly effective.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social needs are provided through the regular assemblies and modelled by staff. Pupils appreciate the books they win in the weekly reading assembly. Pupils' experience of diverse cultures is less explicit in the curriculum or around the school. They have more limited understanding and appreciation of a range of different cultures from around the world and of living in a multicultural society.
- Parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, have mixed views about the quality of leadership and how well leaders manage behaviour. Most parents consider their children to be happy and safe in school. However, a few parents commented that, 'Behaviour has not always been dealt with well enough,' while others commented that, 'Children feel safe and behaviour is now being dealt with straight away.' Inspectors found that issues of behaviour are being dealt with more consistently and that the number of incidents of poor behaviour is declining.

### **Governance of the school**

- The quality of governance has not been as effective as it should have been in holding school leaders to account for the quality of education and leadership. Governors have not ensured that pupils get the quality of education required for all groups to excel.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are working closely with the local authority through a recently established improvement board to ensure that changes to the quality of teaching are rapid and pupils' achievement increases.
- Governors are highly committed to the school and bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the role. From minutes of meetings, they are challenging leaders increasingly robustly. The information they have received in the past has not always been an accurate picture of the school's performance.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and pupils are safe.
- School leaders carry out appropriate checks when recruiting new staff and keep records in satisfactory order.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and most parents agreed. Pupils are taught about issues of bullying, including cyber bullying, and know what to do if they consider they are at risk. Pupils speak maturely when they share their views regarding the subject of bullying and how confident they are that staff deal with any issues that arise.
- Staff are trained and know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They raise concerns appropriately, using the school's procedures effectively.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent. Until this academic year, there has been an issue with the accuracy and use of the school's chosen assessment. Consequently, pupils have not been provided with work that matched their

needs well enough, which has slowed the progress they make.

- Currently, some teachers do not use the accurate information they now hold to plan learning that precisely meets pupils' needs and abilities. This is particularly the case in lower key stage 2 where pupils do not make sufficient progress from their individual starting points.
- Learning support assistants are committed to supporting pupils whom they work with on an individual basis. During the inspection, several assistants were observed using questions effectively to help individuals explain their understanding. However, in lessons, learning support assistants are too often not used effectively to enable more pupils to make progress in their learning.
- The quality of teaching in subjects such as science varies too much. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is not secure enough. In some books, pupils demonstrate that they have been learning new concepts and topics well. In others, particularly in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2, pupils' progress is limited. This is because all pupils complete the same worksheets irrespective of their starting points or abilities. The most able cannot excel and the least able do not complete their work because it is too difficult. Neither group makes sufficient progress.
- Leaders have had significant impact on changing the way that reading is taught. Pupils now have access to a better range of books that are appropriate to their stage of reading and of interest to boys. Boys enjoy the competition of reading five times and want to show how well they are achieving. In class, teachers have placed a greater emphasis on the teaching of reading. Assessment evidence shows that pupils' progress, especially in upper key stage 2, is accelerating as a result.
- Teachers have changed the way they teach pupils their sounds in phonics this academic year. Results have not been good enough over a period of time. All staff have recently been trained to deliver high-quality lessons. The impact of this new programme is very evident. Since its introduction in spring 2018, more pupils are making accelerated progress and starting to catch up with other pupils nationally. Although results this year may not be in line with national averages, they should show an improvement on 2017.
- In mathematics, pupils' books demonstrate that they follow a sequence of learning that becomes progressively more difficult. However, in many classes, pupils repeat calculations of similar difficulty for too long before adults move their learning forward. Consequently, pupils have less opportunity to grapple with more complicated concepts or explain their understanding. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities or who are less able rarely have the opportunity to use their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills in different ways.
- Where there is stronger practice over time, for example in upper key stage 2, pupils are making better progress and catching up on learning lost in previous years. In these classes, for example, teachers choose interesting and successful ways to engage pupils in writing. Pupils work diligently and practise their skills well, using good vocabulary and choosing words effectively and carefully in their writing. The standard of pupils' writing is of the same high quality in other subjects such as religious education and science in these year groups. However, there is not consistent practice across the school.

- The quality of pupils' presentation, handwriting and spelling is better where teachers have high and consistent expectations. However, some books are poorly presented. Adults do not routinely expect pupils to present their work well or insist on the best handwriting or letter formation.
- Teachers do not use the start of lessons or the school day consistently well. Lost learning time was a feature of some classes when pupils arrived at the start and towards the end of the school day.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Even though the vast majority of pupils are keen and highly motivated to learn, adults do not routinely develop pupils' thinking and reasoning skills. Consequently, when asked questions, some pupils, especially boys, are reluctant to join in or give more than one-word answers. At times, pupils do not appear as confident and independent in class as they are in one-to-one situations.
- Fixed-period exclusions are currently too high and remain above those found nationally. Leaders acknowledge that fixed-term exclusions increased when the new behaviour policy was introduced. Inspection evidence shows that the use of fixed-term exclusions is reducing each term. Pupils are more settled in class as adults use a consistent approach to behaviour management and welfare.
- Pupils understand in an age-appropriate way what bullying is and how upsetting it can be. Those spoken with were happy to speak with an adult and were confident that adults would sort out any issues. Pupils explained that since the new headteacher has started, 'issues and concerns are now taken more seriously and dealt with'.
- Adults ensure that pupils receive instruction about keeping safe when using online technology. In Years 5 and 6, pupils were confident about what they would do to keep safe when using the internet.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well catered for. Through daily events such as the gym trail, pupils who have specific needs are given the opportunity to practise and develop their skills in a safe and caring environment. Pupils persevere and enjoy the circuit of activities to develop their balancing and coordination skills. They are proud of their success.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- During less structured times, or when expectations are not clear or too low, a minority of pupils are over boisterous. A few parents expressed concerns about the standard of behaviour during playtimes. Inspectors agree. Owing to a lack of activities at playtimes to occupy pupils, the behaviour of a minority of pupils is not good enough. This behaviour goes unchecked and often results in lost learning time at the start of

lessons. Leaders' records of behaviour incidents show that they deal swiftly and appropriately with any issues that are reported. The number of such incidents is reducing.

- When the teacher requests attention, pupils generally respond quickly and focus on their learning. Even where lessons are dull or do not meet their needs well enough, most pupils complete their work to the best of their ability. However, some pupils are not working as hard as they could, and chatter and lose focus in some lessons.
- Attendance has been below average for several years and the proportion of pupils who have been persistently absent from school has been above that found nationally. Current records demonstrate that more pupils are attending regularly, and overall attendance is closer to average. School leaders are working with those families who require additional support to reduce persistent absenteeism.
- Pupils are articulate and understand the school's routines well. Pupils spoken with during the inspection were keen to tell inspectors about the recent changes to the school and how much they enjoy their reading. They especially enjoy the weekly reading assembly. Pupils' behaviour during this event was exemplary.
- Most pupils consider that behaviour is good for most of the time. They have confidence in the new leadership and are certain that behaviour at The Mayflower Primary School is rapidly improving.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- The outstanding achievement of pupils has not been sustained since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress across key stage 2 has been broadly similar in writing and mathematics when compared with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points for at least two years. Pupils' progress in reading at key stage 2 was significantly below that found nationally in 2017 and was lower than in 2016.
- Pupils are currently making accelerated progress in upper key stage 2, particularly in writing. This acceleration is not sufficient to make up for the previous lower quality of expectation and provision they have received. Consequently, pupils' current attainment remains below national averages this year in reading, writing and mathematics combined at key stage 2.
- Girls outperform boys. Girls' achievement is broadly in line with the national standard at the end of each key stage. In the past, boys have not caught up and their lack of success has been highly evident in many of the published results in 2016 and 2017. This year, in some classes, boys are making better progress, so they can achieve as well as they should.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not achieved well enough. Additional funds have not been used well to support these pupils' learning. In 2017, the progress disadvantaged pupils made in reading was significantly below that found nationally. Leaders have ensured that this year, assessments are accurate and the progress these pupils make is closely monitored so more can achieve well.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making steady progress. Their achievements are closely monitored. Currently, most pupils on the SEN register are boys. They are starting to receive more specific and appropriate support that helps

them make better progress.

- Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics at the required standard at key stage 1 have been just below the national average for the previous two years. In 2017, there were some improvements in writing and mathematics and consequently pupils were better prepared for key stage 2 in these subjects; boys achieved well in mathematics. However, the proportion of most-able pupils who reached a greater depth was lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check fell dramatically in 2017 and was significantly below the national average. Leaders have taken swift action and pupils are making rapid gains currently. They are on track to achieve more than has previously been the case and closer to the national average.
- Pupils' progress in Year 6 shows significant improvement. These pupils are being better prepared for the move to the next stage of their education than has been the case previously.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- For the previous four years, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development has been below the national average. This is because boys have not achieved as well as they should in every area of learning. Boys have not been previously well prepared for Year 1.
- This year, boys are progressing well in many of the main areas of learning. In their physical development, boys are outperforming girls. However, there remains an issue with boys' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Adults do not use the information they have precisely enough to plan further opportunities for boys to use their literacy and numeracy skills during their play.
- Leadership and staff in the Reception classes are new this academic year. The early years leader has an accurate view of the strengths and weakness of the provision and has significantly improved the activities available for children in the outdoor area. During the inspection, children enjoyed the many activities on offer, especially playing with the water and designing their own tractors using the large construction equipment.
- Children are confident in early years. They happily explain their learning and what they enjoy best. Recently, children visited a farm and they were able to use technical vocabulary well to explain their understanding.
- Children behave well. They understand the routines and willingly follow them. The relationships with adults are positive and friendly. Children demonstrate that they feel safe and are safe in a warm and welcoming environment.
- Many children start school with individual skills and abilities that are appropriate for their age. Children's online learning journeys demonstrate that they are making progress from their individual starting points this year in most areas of learning. This year, more children are on track to reach a good level of development. More can be done to ensure that the most able children exceed the early years expectations.



- Leaders have developed good links with parents and local nurseries through visiting settings and homes prior to children starting at school. Parents spoken with during the inspection stated that their children are happy and well cared for.

## School details

Unique reference number	114747
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10046481

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cheryl Thompson
Headteacher	Elizabeth Bartholomew
Telephone number	01255 502444
Website	<a href="http://www.mayflower-pri.essex.sch.uk">www.mayflower-pri.essex.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@mayflower-pri.essex.sch.uk">admin@mayflower-pri.essex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–17 October 2013

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is not English is significantly below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is just above average. Those who have an education, health and care plan or statement of SEN is below average.
- The school received a warning notice in May 2016 because the school was below the government's floor standards at that time. In 2016 and 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based

on key stage 2 academic performance results for three years from 2015 to 2017.

## **Information about this inspection**

- The inspectors gathered a range of information to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included observing learning in all classes, some of which were jointly seen with senior leaders.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils, scrutinised books and considered the school's own assessment information to check on the progress pupils make over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and other senior and middle leaders. A meeting was held with the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation around safeguarding and scrutinised the statutory information on the recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and staff to gather their views. Parents' views were analysed from 72 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Kim Hall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michael Jude	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Estcourt	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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