



Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115109
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279513
Inspection dates 15 March 2006 to 15 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Robert McKeown LI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Docwra Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		CO5 9DS
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01376570411
Number on roll	373	Fax number	01376572408
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Jeff Payne
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr. John Brace

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England Primary School is a large voluntary controlled school situated in a village near Colchester in Essex. Almost all children are from white British backgrounds. There are no children at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. Few children are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of children who have learning difficulties and disabilities is much lower than average for this size of school. There are five children with statements of special educational need. Most children start school with standards which are in line with those expected for their age. The headteacher has led the school for ten years.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Kelvedon St Mary's is a successful school with many outstanding features. Children receive a very good education which combines achieving high standards with the enjoyment of a wide range of learning opportunities. Parents' comments endorse this view and many believe the school is excellent. All children are given a very good start in the Reception classes and they continue to make good progress throughout the school. Older children make outstanding progress and they achieve consistently high standards in Year 6. The high standards children achieve are the result of consistently good and often outstanding teaching. Teachers' use of Information and communication technology (ICT) to support their teaching is a significant strength. Children with additional needs receive very good support and they make very good progress. Provision for children's personal development is outstanding. Children are very enthusiastic about the things they do in school and they participate fully in the wide variety of activities offered to them. All children are well-cared for and their contributions are valued. They regard school as a secure place in which their teachers make learning fun. Leadership and management of the headteacher and the school's leadership team are outstanding. The school's success is founded on excellent teamwork. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all children reach their full potential. The school knows what it needs to do to improve; actions to further enhance the curriculum and to raise standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are already underway. Governors discharge their responsibilities well. They work effectively with staff, parents and children to ensure the school is successful. The school has moved forward well since the last inspection and its capacity to sustain success is strong. It could share many of the good things it does with other schools. It offers very good value for money.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children make outstanding progress and by the time they leave for secondary school they achieve very high standards. Children start school with a broad range of abilities with standards that are typical for their ages. Children make very good progress in their first year and by the time they enter Year 1 most are achieving at or above the level expected for their age. In Years 1 and 2 children continue to make good progress. Progress is outstanding from Year 3 to Year 6 and many children achieve the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. All children with additional needs make very good progress. Overall, standards are consistently well above the national average and significantly so in reading and writing in Year 2. In mathematics they have been above national levels but not so markedly; something the school is aware of and is tackling. By the end of Year 6, standards have been consistently and exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science with boys and girls doing equally well. Standards have improved appreciably since the time of the last inspection and this reflects the school's high expectations and its commitment to every child achieving their full potential. The school's approach to tracking children's progress is very thorough and teachers ensure that all children achieve as well as they can. The school

is not content to rest on this success and continually looks for ways to make certain that the high standards are sustained.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy coming to school and they involve themselves enthusiastically with all that it offers them. Attendance is good. Relationships between staff and children are outstanding and this means children's attitudes to learning are very positive. Children say that teachers make their learning fun and that they trust them to do their best. Children feel safe and secure. They know that they can share their feelings with their teachers and other adults. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Children understand that bullying is unacceptable and any incidents are rare and are dealt with effectively. Older children act as playground pals at lunchtime and take pride in accepting important responsibilities such as house-captains and school council members. Children have the opportunity to talk about their feelings in groups and this ensures that all children feel valued and included. Assemblies and lessons in personal, social and health education contribute well to children's very good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, although the school appreciates that cultural development could be strengthened further. Children gain a good understanding of the importance of helping others by raising funds for local and national charities. They develop a good range of basic and personal skills to ensure their future social and economic well-being. The school council meets regularly to discuss improvements and promote children's views. It makes recommendations to the governing body and helps organise school events. Links with the local church and community are strong. The school choir sings at church events and many village clubs use the school premises. The school is part of national initiative which promotes healthy lifestyles. Older children learn about making safe choices and assessing risk. Healthy snacks and fresh fruit are eaten at break times and the school is involved in a local partnership which promotes participation in two hours of physical education (PE) and sports activities each week. Children are encouraged to be active and many take part in the very good range of physical activities within and beyond the school day. Children enjoy school lunches. The school's kitchen staff have transformed the quality of the meals, so much so that demand is exceptionally high.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The school believes that the quality of teaching is never less than good and is often outstanding. Inspectors agree: children would not be achieving such high standards unless this was the case. The learning atmosphere in the school is very positive and children listen attentively to their teachers. A short visit to any classroom quickly reveals how much teachers enjoy their work and how much they are committed to providing well-planned learning experiences for all children. A particularly strong

feature of the teaching is the use of interactive whiteboards. These are used expertly by teachers to stimulate learning and illustrate important teaching points. Teachers keep a very tight check on children's progress and this ensures that extra help and challenge are provided when required. Assessment is thorough and helps teachers to plan effectively. Teachers in Reception are trialling an exciting assessment initiative which enables them to photograph and record children's learning using a hand-held computer with digital camera. Teaching assistants support teachers very well, guiding the work of individual children and groups. The high level of creativity among the staff and the drive to improve even the best teaching is exemplified in a revised system for setting targets to help children learn more effectively. Some classes are divided into specific groups for English and mathematics to provide more focussed teaching; this is working well, particularly in helping to raise standards further in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' subject specialisms are used effectively to provide high quality learning in subjects such as music, art, history, PE and design and technology. During the inspection, the day was punctuated by the sound of children singing enthusiastically and tunefully in assemblies and school production rehearsals. The introduction of specialist teaching has been very successful. Older children have benefited particularly from having lessons in German. Teaching and learning in ICT are also very good and this is enhanced by having a full-time technician working alongside teachers in a well-equipped computer suite.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school succeeds in providing a very good range of experiences and opportunities to secure high standards and enjoyment for learners. Teachers are reflective and resourceful. They plan activities which are meaningful and engage children's interest. Theme weeks, which focus on subjects such as art, enrich the curriculum; very good work in sculpture was on display during the inspection. Visits to the locality and a residential visit for older children extend learning beyond school. Children take part in a full range of extra-curricular activities and play in sports matches with other schools. An outstanding aspect of the curriculum is the work in creative arts. Many children sing in the school choir and learn to play a musical instrument; older children play together in the school's orchestra. Each term, two year groups perform a school production of drama, dance and song which is linked well to the learning undertaken in other subjects. The creativity, energy, enthusiasm and expertise of the staff contribute significantly to the overall high quality of the curriculum. The school is always looking for ways in which to improve the curriculum and how teachers organise children's learning. The assistant headteacher is developing a comprehensive system for planning and resourcing teaching using ICT. This is designed to help teachers develop further the linking of learning across different subjects. A similar idea is also proposed to enable parents to access school policies and learning programmes, including homework, on the school web-site

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support given to children are very good. All staff ensure that children learn in a very positive environment. Arrangements for promoting children's health, safety and welfare, including child protection, are secure. Children are confident about taking any problems to their teachers and know that any incidents, such as bullying, will be dealt with firmly. There are very good systems for monitoring children's progress so that teachers identify as early as possible those children in need of additional support. Teachers and support staff, with the help of outside agencies, work together very well to ensure all children with additional needs receive very good support. Communication with parents is very secure on all matters. An overwhelming number say that they are very pleased with the high level of care and quality in the education that their children receive. Parents are impressed by 'the calm, organised and happy atmosphere' present at the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The success of the school is founded on the collective strengths of its leadership teams. The Headteacher is popular with children and held in high regard by governors, parents and staff. He successfully manages a team of highly committed teachers and support staff whose strong commitment is to ensure that all children reach their full potential. School development planning is sharply focused on the right issues. Since its last inspection many aspects of the school have improved and standards are much higher, particularly in Year 6. The school's own written evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is at times understated and the school could share more widely some of the good things it does. Teamwork is a key feature of the school's effectiveness. Teachers and support staff meet regularly to plan and evaluate their work. Excellent support is given to new members of staff and they are very happy working in the school. The senior leadership team regularly monitor the school's performance to look for ways to make further improvements. Subject leaders observe lessons to assess and improve the quality of teaching and learning. They also lead training on new teaching approaches. The Special Educational Needs coordinator manages the support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities very well. The school is alive with new ideas and teachers enjoy working in such a stimulating environment. Accommodation and resources are very good. The governing body discharges its responsibilities extremely well. Governors regularly attend school events and seek the views of staff, parents and children on how the school might be improved. They give the headteacher and staff their full support and challenge them to strive for further improvements.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed the day I spent with you. Overall, I think your school is excellent. Mr Brace and all the staff are doing their best to make your school as good as it can be. All the adults care for you very well and keep you safe. Your teachers organise exciting lessons so that you enjoy your learning and have fun. I was pleased to see everyone listening very well and working hard in lessons. The interactive whiteboards are very good idea, they make your learning clearer and more exciting. Having targets to help you improve your work is really useful. Some of the target charts on the walls were very ingenious. I was very impressed with the displays of sculpture work and the wonderful singing in assembly and in the play rehearsal. You achieve very good results in your English, mathematics and science tests, well done! I enjoyed talking to you about your life at St Mary's. There are lots of good things going on in your school. I liked the computer suite and the school lunches are fantastic. You have many good clubs to go to; I hope you say thank you to your teachers for organising them. The school council has a very big responsibility to make sure your views are represented. It's a great idea to have playground pals to help with games at lunchtime. I also think you are very kind to raise money for charity. You have a lot to look forward to in the rest of this year, make sure you do your best and enjoy every minute.