



Newlands Spring Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115241
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279552
Inspection dates 29 September 2005 to 30 September 2005
Reporting inspector Dr. Anna Coyle LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dickens Place
School category	Foundation		CM1 4UU
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01245442031
Number on roll	369	Fax number	01245443660
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.G Atkinson
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Jacqui Bridges

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school in Chelmsford. Most of the children are of White British descent and several are from different ethnic backgrounds. A few children learn English as an additional language, and they speak Spanish and German at home. The number of children eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is also lower than other schools nationally; these children have a range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication needs, physical disabilities and social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, with some outstanding features in teaching and management. It has improved well since the last inspection and successfully dealt with the issues that were identified in 2000. The school's own assessment of itself is that it is good, and the parents and children agree. The inspection evidence concurs with these views and shows that the school provides good value for money. The school is a welcoming, friendly place in which everyone feels cared for and fully involved. Children reach good standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. They make good progress in learning and personal development because the teaching is very good and some of it is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants organise plenty of interesting activities to help children enjoy lessons and learn new skills. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Leadership and management are good with outstanding features in the thorough procedures for self-evaluation. Staff, children and most parents feel that their views are considered and acted upon. The school is well placed to continue its development. It has very good links with local schools, which it uses well to benefit children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

-Make full use of teachers' lesson evaluations to adjust the planning for the following lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are good in English, mathematics and science by the time children reach the end of Year 6. They achieve well and do better than children in similar schools in all three subjects, particularly at the higher levels. Children in Year 2 reach good standards in reading, writing and mathematics and they also do better than children in similar schools. Standards have been steady over several years. Children make good progress from the time they enter the school until they leave when they are eleven years old. They start school with similar skills to most children of their age and they make good progress in the reception year. Throughout Years 1 to 6, children enjoy learning. They work hard and achieve the challenging targets the teachers set for them and the most capable children do especially well. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because they are closely supported by teaching assistants during lessons. Children for whom English is an additional language do especially well because the school has recently secured extra help to provide prompt and very focused guidance for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Excellent behaviour and an enthusiasm for learning are reasons why children enjoy school and do well. They say, 'School is meant to be the best bit of your life - and it is!' Attendance is good and children arrive at school punctually. They know that they are treated fairly and that adults will listen if they have a problem. Older children take their 'buddy' responsibilities seriously. A particular strength is the contribution they make to the school and the community through fund-raising activities; for example, children have raised large sums of money for a wide range of charities, both locally and further afield. Children discuss their views and these are taken forward to the School Council. They say that they are taken seriously because they asked if girls could wear trousers and now they can. They understand the need to live healthily, choosing healthy meals when possible. There are very good opportunities for exercise and sport. The strong emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics and using computers prepares children well for the future. As a result of the good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, children respect the views, values and beliefs of others. Working together in pairs and small groups helps them to mix happily together.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is very good and accurately reflects the school's own views about the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is never less than satisfactory, mostly good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers have high expectations for children and, as a result, most children work hard and try their best in lessons. Teachers also have warm relationships with children in their classes and use a variety of activities and methods to maintain their interest. Children also say that their teachers are kind. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards in lessons to stimulate learning. They also provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills through effective question-and-answer sessions, especially at the beginnings and ends of lessons. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to help children to learn effectively and make good progress. Assessment procedures are good. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, work was precisely matched to the different learning needs of children. As a result, some children made exceptional progress in measuring lines of various lengths and others made equally exceptional progress in measuring the lengths of everyday classroom objects. Teachers and support staff regularly inform children of how well they are doing during the lesson and what they need to do to improve. As a result, children usually know what they are expected to learn and how much progress they have made.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Children are taught a wide range of subjects with a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Children in Years 3 to 6 also learn French. The curriculum is planned carefully with well thought-out links between different subjects. Teachers plan sequences of lessons to build children's knowledge and skills, and they evaluate these effectively. However, they do not always make full use of this information to change their planning for the following lesson. For example, the youngest children in the reception year would benefit from a greater focus than at present on personal and social skills in the first few weeks of the autumn term to help them settle quickly and learn school routines, whilst the older children would benefit from more independent activities in some lessons. Learning is greatly strengthened through a variety of visits, visitors and activity days. For example, during the inspection, children in Year 2 visited Mountfitchet Castle, which enhanced their enjoyment and learning of history. Children also have good opportunities to develop academically and personally through a wide range of out-of-school activities and lunchtime clubs. Younger children make good progress in learning a modern language during the lunchtime French club, whilst older children successfully compete in netball and football championships, winning cups and trophies. The school has developed strong links with two local secondary schools to extend the learning of children with special gifts and talents. It also provides good support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and very good support for children who are at an early stage of learning English.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care, guidance and support are very good. All staff take good care of the children and promote their well-being. They know the children well. Adults work hard to provide a safe and secure environment. Child protection procedures are good, and possible risks to health and safety are assessed carefully. Staff clearly understand the procedures. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive effective support; for example, children were helped to join in a lesson when the teaching assistant quietly repeated the teacher's instructions. Children who learn English as an additional language do particularly well because they receive such prompt help; those new to the school have already made considerable progress in their writing. Children work hard to reach challenging targets and they know what to do to improve their work through good quality marking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set a clear sense of direction for the school and promote a welcoming, friendly working environment that benefits the Children, parents and staff. They meet regularly with

the senior management team and have excellent systems for checking how well the school is doing and identifying what could be improved. Staff work hard to ensure that children are treated equally and fairly and the very strong links with local schools, have a good effect on children personal development because it means they have plenty of opportunities to join in with additional activities. The governors watch over the school effectively and manage the finances well. They work closely with the head teacher and senior managers to achieve good value for money. The school has dealt with the issues from the previous inspection successfully by improving planning, providing more challenge for the most capable children, improving teachers' marking and assessment, and making better use of teaching assistants. Its capacity to make further improvements is good.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	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	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	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	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	NA
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

Following our visit to inspect your school, we would like to thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us. We would like to tell you about some of the things we found out. We think you go to a good school where the teachers are kind and helpful. You benefit from very good teaching, and some of it is outstanding. Teachers work hard to prepare interesting lessons for you so that you enjoy learning. This means that you make good progress and reach good standards in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. The teaching assistants help to take good care of you and encourage you to take care of each other. We were impressed by the way the older children in Year 6 manage the office at lunchtimes and make sure that anyone coming into or leaving the school signs the visitors' book. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very hard to make sure that everything runs smoothly so that you can learn in a friendly, welcoming place. They work well with the rest of the staff and everyone helps each other. Because you go to such a good school, there is very little that we could find that could be better. The teachers are making some changes to the activities they plan to help you learn and we think that they should go on doing this, but include more links between the ends of lessons and the beginnings of the next.