

# Mayflower Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114747
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311692
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Messer

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs E Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Springett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Main Road Dovercourt Essex CO12 4AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01255 502444
<b>Fax number</b>	01255 556794

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and its monitoring procedures. They investigated the progress made by pupils, especially faster learners, in literacy, numeracy and science. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children in the Foundation Stage was also evaluated. Evidence was gathered from classroom visits, discussions with staff and pupils and examination of school documents, especially assessment data. Responses in parents' questionnaires were analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average but is particularly high in some year groups. The attainment of many, but not all, children on entry to the school is well below that expected for four year olds and is often particularly low in communication, language and literacy. In some year groups a large proportion of pupils join or leave the school part way through this phase of their education. The school has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the intermediate Healthy Schools award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school judges its overall effectiveness as good and inspectors agree. Pupils' achievement and personal development is good; they are courteous, well behaved and become confident learners. They have a good understanding of how to keep fit and lead healthy lifestyles. Most parents and carers are pleased with the education provided. One comment was typical, 'This is a very happy school. The teachers are lovely and work hard to make sure all the children do well.'

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, providing a firm foundation for children as they move up through the school. Because teaching and learning are effective throughout the school, pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress. In most classes teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' performance and the pace of learning is brisk. Teachers use interactive white boards well to enliven lessons. In one lesson observed during the inspection this technology was used exceptionally well to show children how to measure perimeters accurately. Relationships are good and pupils say that teachers make learning fun. Although pupils start school with standards that are generally well below those expected for their age, by Year 6 standards attained in English, mathematics and science are average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive particularly good support from highly skilled and well trained teaching assistants. This helps most of them to make good progress in class. However, there is scope for teachers to receive more guidance about how to teach pupils with particularly complex learning difficulties so they can be confident that these pupils make as much progress as they possibly can.

The curriculum is structured well; includes a good range of visitors, after school clubs and visits to places of interest which all enrich learning. As a result, pupils enjoy school and appreciate how hard staff work to help them in their learning. Care, guidance and support are generally good. Pupils are well cared for and receive good guidance on how to stay safe and look after themselves. All procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are in place. Pupils have reasonably challenging targets and many can recite them. For example, one pupil explained, 'I have to learn all my tables up to 12x12, including division facts, and must be able to explain my answers'. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their knowledge of basic skills, including those in information and communication technology, gives them a good foundation for the next phase in their education.

The leadership and management of the school is good overall. The headteacher gives a good steer to the school's work and the vast majority of staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities well. Assessment data is used successfully to set challenging targets for the school's performance by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. A weakness in this generally positive picture relates to the leadership provided in relation to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Senior staff, governors and parents have identified this issue and appropriate action is being taken to bring about improvements. As a temporary measure, the headteacher is undertaking many of the duties related to leadership and management of this particular aspect of the school's work. Finances are managed effectively and the school provides good value for money. Leaders have successfully tackled the issues raised at the time of the last inspection. The new deputy headteacher gives good support and works closely with the headteacher on improving provision. There is a strong focus on raising standards further and good termly action plans are produced that are designed to accelerate pupils' progress, quickly identify any underachievement and help pupils to achieve their targets. These action plans are having a

significant impact on ensuring that staff work with a united determination to raise standards. The vast majority of governors support the school well and are keen to fulfil their roles. However, a large proportion of governors are new and lack of training limits them in their ability to function corporately or hold the school to account for its performance. Nevertheless, the school has good capacity to make further improvements.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a particular strength of the school. Pupils receive a warm welcome and quickly settle into class routines. There is an intensive approach to teaching children the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent, as well as how to use this phonic knowledge to make words. There is an equally strong emphasis on teaching children about shapes, patterns and numbers. Learning is great fun in the Reception classes. Children love crawling into the dark dens to shine torches and look at shadows as part of their scientific study of light. The teacher, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants work well together as a team and share high expectations of the children's ability to learn rapidly. Because learning routines are so well established, children quickly become confident learners. Provision is managed extremely well and staff are constantly exploring ways of making learning even more exciting. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and by the end of Reception reach many of the early learning goals, except in communication, language and literacy, where there is still a considerable amount of catching up to do.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that leadership and management for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is robust and requirements fully met.
- Provide appropriate training for governors to ensure that roles and responsibilities are understood and fulfilled effectively.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No



## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Mayflower Primary School, Dovercourt, Essex, CO12 4AJ

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

We think that there are many good things about the school. We were impressed by how quickly children in Reception learn. They make really good progress in developing early reading, writing and number skills. You told us that you are happy in school and said that one of the best things about the school was how kind and generous the teachers are. We agree. They certainly work hard and, with the support of the teaching assistants, help you to learn. You also said that you particularly enjoy making friends. The school is certainly a friendly place and you all work and play happily together. You told us that you feel very comfortable and secure in school and that you get good advice about health and safety. You know how to look after yourselves and understand the need for vigorous exercise and a balanced diet. Behaviour is good and you talk sensibly about your work. You are willing workers and want to do your very best. We were particularly impressed at how confident most of you are.

There are several things that we have asked the teachers to do to make things even better. We think that more should be done to help children who have learning difficulties. We think that the governors could work even closer together as a team to make sure your school is continuously improving. We know you will be keen to carry on working hard and there's nothing to stop you doing even better, so aim even higher!

We wish you every success in the future.

John Messer

Lead inspector