

# Maldon Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114806
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	354318
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Gray

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

---

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	370
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joan Binder
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Disley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Wantz Chase Maldon Essex
<b>Telephone number</b>	01621 853409
<b>Fax number</b>	01621 842779
<b>Email address</b>	head@maldon.essex.sch.uk

---

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 19 lessons and saw 18 teachers. They observed the school's work, met pupils, governors and members of staff, and looked at a sample of pupils' work. They also looked at school plans and policies, records of pupils' progress, curriculum plans and the school improvement plan, and analysed 124 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by different groups pupils, especially higher attaining pupils and girls
- pupils' attendance and how the school tries to improve it
- the impact of leaders and managers at all levels on raising standards.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than most primaries. Most pupils are of White British origin and there are few pupils at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above what is normally found, as is the proportion with a statement of educational needs. The largest group has behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school runs a breakfast club for its own pupils. Since the last inspection, there has been a large number of staff changes, and the current headteacher was appointed in April 2008.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This school gives its pupils a satisfactory and improving standard of education. After the last inspection pupils' standards of attainment declined, and this was a cause of concern to the local authority. The headteacher and senior managers have led the whole staff team in taking greater accountability for pupils' progress. As a result, standards are likely to be higher in the 2010 national tests and teachers' assessments in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' progress is satisfactory, but it is not consistent between classes or groups of pupils. Higher attaining pupils do not always receive enough challenge in their work and so do not always reach their full potential. Boys perform well in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, but girls do not attain as highly as the boys do. The school is aware of this difference but has not yet devised an effective strategy for bridging the gap.

Pupils enjoy school and this is evident in the happy atmosphere around the school and in lessons. One parent commented, 'The staff show commitment to the school and we feel our child feels he belongs to a community.' Pupils have a good understanding of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle and are influenced by this in their choice of food and the exercise they take. They care about their school and the local area and contribute well to the community's future.

The curriculum provides pupils with interesting lessons and promotes their personal development well. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is currently being audited to ensure that it meet the school's needs as well as possible. However, pupils currently have limited access to computers in their classrooms. As a result, they have too few opportunities to use ICT in the full range of subjects and to develop their skills. Teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching in some lessons, but the quality is not sufficiently consistent to ensure that pupils make even progress as they move through the school.

The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Big improvements have been made in the way teachers track pupils' progress, so that pupils who are falling behind receive prompt help to enable them to catch up. This is beginning to have an impact on improving pupils' progress. However, senior managers do not make enough use of this information in judging the effectiveness of teaching in each class. This means that weaknesses in some areas are not identified quickly enough, for example the gender issue in mathematics, and so inconsistencies in teaching and outcomes remain. Nonetheless, the successes so far and the developing management systems show that the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Improve the rate of progress pupils make in each class by:
  - ensuring that the activities planned for pupils always build on their prior learning, especially for higher attaining pupils
  - analysing the reasons why girls in Years 3 to 6 do not reach standards in mathematics that are as high as those the boys reach, and devising appropriate strategies to raise their attainment.
- Raise standards in ICT by:
  - speeding up the process of renewing the school's equipment
  - enabling teachers to make more use of ICT in all subjects
  - training teachers in the use of the new assessment system, so that they are aware of the full range of standards in their class.
- Achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:
  - building on the work done to give teachers greater responsibility for the progress their pupils make
  - making more rigorous use of assessment data to pinpoint weaker aspects of teaching.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

The work seen in lessons and pupils' books showed that pupils' attainment by Year 6 is broadly average. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve at similar rates. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, and sometimes better, as a result of good support, enabling a small number to be taken off the register. Higher attaining pupils also make satisfactory progress overall, but sometimes are required to carry out tasks which are too easy for them. This means they are not progressing as fast as they could be. In national tests at Year 6, girls' attainment is markedly lower in mathematics than that of boys. The school's own data show that this is also the case in other year groups in Key Stage 2. It has not yet analysed girls' attainment to see if it is better in one class in a year group than in the other. Inspectors found no single cause for this difference, but noted that in some classes there are few girls in the higher attaining groups. They also observed that on these occasions boys sometimes dominate the girls.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school, but, at the same time, report some minor bullying. They are adamant that this is not a serious issue in the school, because most incidents are dealt with successfully. The 'worry box' helps a lot, they say. But lunch-time assistants are felt to be less effective in dealing with bullying, and all the pupils spoken to confirmed this. The school is aware of this and is using strategies to improve the situation. Behaviour in many lessons is good but, occasionally, pupils who find it hard to control their behaviour distract others. Pupils contribute well to their own

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

community and that of Maldon. Attendance rates are broadly average but there is a tiny core of families who resist the school's good attempts to persuade them to send their children to school at all times when they are not ill. This slows down their progress and makes the teachers' job more difficult when there is ground to be caught up. Pupils have a good understanding of why acceptance of the beliefs of others is important.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

In some lessons, teachers meet the needs of their pupils well. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were learning to use the eight-point compass. Higher attaining pupils were using local maps to give accurate descriptions of a route to a stranger. Lower attainers were drawing the routes of aircraft on a world map, following written instructions, and middle attainers were using programmable robots to move around a map of India, this half-term's topic. The activities matched the pupils' ability well, resulting in much involvement and enjoyment. Not all lessons are so well planned, however, either in the matching of work to ability or in the use of ICT. Although teachers are involved every half term in assessing their pupils' progress, they do not

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

always make sufficient use of this knowledge in planning for the various groups in their class. Pupils' past work shows that higher attaining pupils, in particular, are sometimes asked to perform the same tasks as the others before they can move on to 'extension' work. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but pointers for improvement are not given often enough in some classes, and not always followed up by the pupils when they have been given. Teaching assistants often give good support but teachers do not always make the best use of them.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs on most occasions. All classes have interactive whiteboards which are used in many lessons, but these are frequently the only ICT equipment available and the pupils were not seen using them. A new system of assessment has very recently been designed by the ICT coordinator, because it is felt that teachers need to achieve a better understanding of what constitutes the various levels of attainment and whether the pupils have reached them.

Pupils receive appropriate pastoral care when they are unwell or upset. The school provides a secure environment, though the very cramped entrance from the narrow access road makes the delivery and collection of children difficult. Breakfast club is well attended and provides a good and caring atmosphere for the children.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior managers have been successful in taking the whole staff forward in their approach to assessment. From a position of seeing analysis of data as a job for leaders, staff now have a common understanding that it is vital to ensuring the progress of all the pupils in their class. Leaders are aware that there is more to be done, both in the way teachers use their knowledge in planning for different groups, and how leaders themselves use the information to give a sharper picture of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in each class. For example, though they are aware of year groups where progress is slower than others, they cannot be certain about which of the two classes in such year groups has the more effective teaching.

Governors support the school appropriately and have begun to be more effective in challenging its performance. Several are frequent visitors to the school but others find it difficult to come to the school during class time, and this lack of first-hand evidence makes it harder for them to fulfil the role of 'critical friend'.

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Risk assessments are undertaken

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

as required, though they tend to be cursory in some cases. The school is diligent in countering any forms of discrimination and promotes equal opportunities well in most respects except the issues surrounding higher attaining pupils and girls' attainment in mathematics. The school's work to promote community cohesion is evident in the family atmosphere in the school and the level of the school's involvement in local matters. The governing body has appropriate plans to broaden pupils' experience of different cultures and backgrounds.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills a little below expectations in most years. They make satisfactory progress and most enter Year 1 with attainment at expected levels. The new leader has introduced many changes designed to increase children's progress, but it is too soon to see their full impact. For example, the equipment for outside learning has been improved, though there are not enough opportunities for children to use larger apparatus such as wheeled toys. Planned activities include an appropriate balance between those chosen freely by the children and those directed by the teachers, although teachers do not always ensure that the balance works in practice. Children's welfare is at the forefront of adults' work and this results in confident and happy children who love to talk to visitors about what they are doing.



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences at school. A small minority do not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. It is possible that this concern may be connected with unresolved bullying issues at lunchtime. Additionally, the school has an above average proportion of pupils with behavioural and emotional problems, who sometimes find it difficult to control themselves. Inspectors found that teachers do all they can under these circumstances and that the school has appropriate procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

A very small minority of parents and carers reported that their views were not taken into account. However, others feel quite the opposite; one commented, 'I really like the Parents' Forum and your requests are always acted on.' A very small minority felt that the school is not led and managed effectively. Inspectors judged leadership and management to be satisfactory and have indicated in the report where it needs to be improved.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maldon Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 370 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	50	56	45	6	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	53	57	46	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	35	71	57	7	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	43	60	48	11	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	55	44	62	50	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	35	69	56	11	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	42	67	54	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	30	72	58	6	5	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	28	82	66	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	24	56	45	24	19	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	25	68	55	17	14	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	29	23	68	55	16	13	5	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	38	65	52	10	8	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maldon Primary School, Maldon, CM9 5DQ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really appreciated the many children who came up to us to speak as we walked about the corridors and playground.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. It keeps you safe and helps you make wise choices about keeping healthy. You make a good contribution to how the school runs and many of you are involved in activities in Maldon. You behave well in most lessons but sometimes a few children forget to control themselves.

We have requested the adults to do a few things to make your school better. We have asked them to help you make the best progress you can, especially those of you who learn fast. In some classes in Key Stage 2, girls do not do as well as the boys in mathematics, so we have asked your teachers to find out why and help them do better. You need more opportunities to use computers in all your lessons, so that you can build on your ICT skills. We also want teachers in every class to make sure that you are always given work at the right level - not too easy or too difficult.

I hope you go on enjoying your time at Maldon Primary. You can do your bit to help by always trying to attend school, so you do not miss out on learning.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**