

Myland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114708
Local Authority	ESSEX LA
Inspection number	311673
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	John Francis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Heather Payne
Headteacher	Mr David Young
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
School address	Mill Road Mile End Colchester CO4 5LD
Telephone number	01206852109
Fax number	01206855086

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of pupils' personal development, pupils' progress in English, and the impact of leadership and management at all levels. Evidence was gathered from observing work in classrooms, scrutinising school documentation and records of pupils' achievement and progress, discussions with senior leaders in the school and with pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school in an expanding suburb of Colchester. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that normally expected for children of this age. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. However, the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is growing and the proportion that speak English as an additional language is close to national average. Pupil mobility is below the national average.

The school has achieved the Sport Active Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Through the commitment of all staff and the excellent guidance given by the headteacher, the school provides its pupils with a good, all round, education. Pupils' personal development in particular is outstanding. Good teaching across the school builds on the good start children get in Reception. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 have generally been above average for many years. This has been a similar picture at the end of Year 6, although standards in English have lagged behind those for mathematics and science. However, changes to organisation, resulting from regular evaluations of the school's work and good analysis of data, have led to even better progress and higher achievement over the last year. Unvalidated test results at Year 6 for 2007 show standards to be well above average in all subjects, including the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics and science. While performance in English has improved, there are still too few pupils attaining the higher levels, and progress in this subject generally is held back by weaker writing skills. With careful planning and excellent classroom support, those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or speak English as an additional language also do very well and achieve above the averages for these groups nationally.

Pupils respond well to the good teaching, a broad and engaging curriculum and the excellent relationships at all levels. They have a wonderful attitude to school. Their behaviour is excellent; they enjoy what they do and show a great commitment to their own learning. Their enjoyment shows in the way they work well together in class and support each other around school. Teachers' planning includes many cooperative activities and helps to strengthen this. Pupils' sense of social responsibility means they make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community. These good social skills, allied to their achievements in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them exceptionally well for the next stages of their education and their longer-term future.

Teachers and support staff know pupils well. Good planning targets pupils' needs very well, helping them to make good progress in most aspects of their learning. Teachers encourage pupils through praise in marking their work and in personal comments. Good systems for pupils' care, guidance and support provide a safe, secure and caring environment. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, as shown by the many positive comments on the parents' questionnaires. The school accurately monitors pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' performance is tracked and evaluated well to set challenging targets for individual pupils and the whole school. Work is currently in hand to modify and link aspects of the curriculum more closely, based on the most recent analysis of this data.

Teachers also recognise and support the work of their colleagues in the school. This creates a culture of strong teamwork and high expectations. Through observing each other and sharing good practice, teachers are constantly improving the quality of pupils' learning. However, because planning for the use of literacy skills across the whole curriculum is not yet secure, pupils have too few opportunities to re-draft and edit their work in all subjects to improve its quality.

The many sporting and other physical activities and the good programme for health education support pupils' physical development very well. They have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay fit and healthy. Regular use of ICT by teachers and pupils develops computer skills to a good level. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write directly

on to the computer, which would further support their literacy skills. Very good provision for music and drama adds well to pupils' excellent cultural development and the introduction of a modern foreign language further enhances this provision.

The headteacher gives outstanding direction to the work of the school and a very strong lead to the staff. The way staff are deployed and the arrangements for their professional development are excellent. This is particularly so for the organisation and management of teaching assistants, whose work significantly enhances that of class teachers. Subject managers have a good knowledge of what goes on in their subjects through regular monitoring. However, records show these give too much emphasis to what teachers are doing rather than evaluating the quality of learning and the outcomes for pupils. Nevertheless, the school's leadership and management are good and their self-evaluation is accurate. The governing body is well informed, and extremely well led by a knowledgeable and active chair of governors. The good progress since the last inspection shows the school has a good capacity for continued improvement and gives good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Excellent management of the Foundation Stage and good, imaginative, teaching have created wonderful opportunities for children in the early years of their schooling. The good systems in place ensure that children settle quickly and confidently, something parents are extremely pleased about. Over time, the school has been able to build well on this positive start and children have made good progress. As a result, most reach, or exceed, the expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. There is a good emphasis on personal, social and health education. This gives children a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy and form good relationships. The recent improvements to the outdoor provision mean that this now closely mirrors the indoor learning opportunities. Work is currently in progress aimed at improving the curriculum further in line with the latest guidance. Good recording and tracking systems enable teachers and teaching assistants to extend children's skills and understanding. This is not yet feeding through into producing greater detail in the planning for individual children but, as with changes to the curriculum, this is work in progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing through giving them more opportunities to re-draft and edit their work and apply this technique to all writing across the curriculum.
- Sharpen classroom monitoring to focus more clearly on the outcomes for pupils.

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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

14 September 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Myland Primary School, Mile End, Colchester, CO4 5LD

Many of you will remember that I visited your school a little while ago. Thank you for making me so welcome. All of you that I talked with were very keen to share your work and ideas. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school.

I agree with your view that you go to a good school. Mr Young and all of the staff take good care of you and work very hard to make your school an exciting and interesting place to come to. All of you make an excellent contribution to your school. Many of you work very hard to help others and improve your school and you carry out your tasks extremely well. You are growing into very sensible and responsible young people. You told me how much you enjoy school, and how you work hard and try your best and I can see this in the quality of your work. I also agree that teachers make your lessons interesting. I liked the way you all work together and help each other. You also told me that everyone in school gets on well and I can see this in the way you work and play together: your behaviour is excellent.

To help you do even better in English, I have asked the teachers to give you more opportunities to improve your writing. You can help by working hard on your writing drafts and paying close attention to those things your teachers have pointed out. I have also asked Mr Young and the teachers to do one other thing. When they are visiting classrooms, it would be very helpful to you if they make sure that they have good ways to check on how well you are learning and how teachers' planning is helping you to reach higher standards.

I wish you well for the future.

John Francis

Lead Inspector