

# Old Heath Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 114710           |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Essex            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 378912           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 22–23 March 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Cheryl Thompson  |

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 of pupils on the school roll</b> | 191                                     |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                      |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Richard Tillbrook                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jeremy Hallum                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17 May 2007                             |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Old Heath Road<br>Colchester<br>CO2 8DD |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01206 794334                            |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01206 790563                            |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | admin@oldheath.essex.sch.uk             |

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|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 4–11             |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 22–23 March 2012 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 378912           |



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson

Additional inspector

Diana Songer-Hudgell

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by seven teachers. The work of learning support assistants supporting small groups of pupils and individuals was also observed as well as the school's breakfast club. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors heard a small number of pupils read in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school evaluation documents, safeguarding documentation, data on pupils' progress and development planning. Responses from questionnaires completed by 127 parents and carers were analysed, as well as those from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average although there is a higher than average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just below average. The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who have minority ethnic heritage is below average. The school has an above average proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school part-way through their education. There is one class for each year group. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Early Years class. The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has achieved National Healthy School status, ActiveMark for high quality physical education, Foundation and Intermediate International Schools Award, Eco-Schools silver award and Diana Anti-bullying Award. The school provides a breakfast club. There is a pre-school on the school site which is inspected separately. An inspection report for this provision can be found on the Ofsted website.

## Inspection judgements

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>2</b> |

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is good rather than outstanding because progress and attainment in mathematics are not as good as in English and teaching is not consistently good enough to be judged outstanding. The cornerstones of the school's good overall effectiveness are the strong leadership of the headteacher and a good curriculum that provides well for pupils' personal development and encourages high aspirations.
- Achievement is good because all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points. Children make satisfactory and improving progress overall in the Early Years class with good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and early literacy skills. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and improving overall, with good progress made in reading. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good and particularly so in Years 5 and 6. Standards of attainment in national assessments at the end of Year 2 are broadly average and at the end of Year 6, above average.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and behave well. Attendance is above average. Pupils know they are part of caring community and are trusted within it. They appreciate all the opportunities the school provides for them to develop socially and academically.
- Teaching is good with the most effective practice in Years 5 and 6 where, as a result, pupils make rapid progress. There are, however, a few inconsistencies, mostly in the younger classes. In mathematics, in a few of the 'set' groups, the number of methods taught for addition, subtraction and multiplication tends to confuse rather than aid those pupils who find mathematics difficult.
- Leadership and management are good with a strong capacity for further improvement. The leadership of teaching and the management of teachers' performance are effective overall with good opportunities for all staff to extend their subject knowledge and develop their teaching methods. Monitoring lessons occasionally lacks rigour in unpicking exactly what needs to be improved to make learning more effective.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning to a consistently good level especially in Key Stage 1 by:
  - implementing a programme of rigorous and regular monitoring of teaching quality by the headteacher and senior team
  - using the outcomes of this monitoring to focus support, training and challenge for individual teachers
  - ensuring teaching assistants are deployed effectively in lesson introductions
  - ensuring there is always an extension activity identified in teachers' planning
  - ensuring teachers set high expectations for pupils to settle to work quickly and work hard.
  
- Increase the consistency in progress in mathematics by:
  - reviewing the number of methods of addition and subtraction taught, especially for pupils who struggle with mathematical concepts
  - monitoring pupils' learning rigorously and regularly and use outcomes of this monitoring to adjust planning and teaching.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

All parents and carers agree that their children make good progress. Inspectors endorse their view overall, although there is slower progress up to the end of Year 2. Apart from this, there is no discernible difference in achievement between different groups of pupils whatever their ability, gender or ethnic heritage. Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 are above those expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils make good progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.

Children's starting points in the Early Years class are wide-ranging and generally a little below age-related expectations especially in communication, language and literacy and their personal development. In these areas, they make good progress, so that by their start in Year 1, their attainment is broadly typical of the age group.

In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is improving but not consistently good. Consequently, pupils' progress is generally satisfactory although good in reading. The school's recent investment in high quality resources and focus on developing children's early literacy skills, including systematic teaching of letter-sounds (phonics) has been very beneficial. The good progress that is evident in children's understanding of how to use letter-sounds in the Early Years class is continued

through Years 1 and 2, where pupils use them effectively to help them read and write. Standards of attainment in reading are above those expected in Year 2. Pupils love reading and talk enthusiastically about books they like.

In almost all lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress was at least good and, in Year 6, outstanding. This rate of progress was also reflected in examples of their work and reading records. In mathematics, across Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught in 'sets' grouped according to prior attainment. For the most able mathematicians in Years 5 and 6, this arrangement is most beneficial; they make rapid progress with a few working at the higher Level 6, a level normally expected of secondary-age pupils. However, for some pupils who find mathematics more difficult, the expectations are sometimes too high and this does not promote the best possible progress.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because staff work well in partnership with specialist teachers and parents and carers, and know exactly how well each pupil is achieving and what each one needs to learn next.

### **Quality of teaching**

All parents, carers and pupils consider that teaching is good, and inspectors endorse their views overall. There are considerable strengths in teaching for the older pupils although satisfactory though improving teaching in Years 1 and 2. A key strength across the school is the good relationships in classes. In the older year groups these enable staff to manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. Pupils are guided very well to help them understand the need to behave appropriately, respect each other and have high aspirations. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning; they listen attentively and work hard because they want to succeed. They demonstrate this in their responses to their teachers' good marking. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough for pupils to settle quickly, listen carefully and work at a good rate. Consequently, pupils do not always apply themselves wholeheartedly to their tasks and make optimum progress, as observed in a guided reading session for Year 2. In the main, teachers' planning is thorough and shows clearly what each group of pupils is expected to learn. On occasions though, planning does not identify an extra challenge for pupils who find work easy. Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively, particularly at the start of lessons. Where teaching is outstanding, as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the level of challenge is high but supported by careful questioning to gauge pupils' understanding before moving to the next task.

Ensuring pupils achieve as well as possible and are well equipped for their future stages of education are at the heart of curriculum planning. In the main, pupils' needs are met effectively, and particularly so in the older year groups, because the curriculum provides them with a wide range of relevant opportunities to practise and reinforce their reading, writing and mathematical skills across subjects. The exception to this is in the mathematics 'sets' for pupils who find mathematics a little difficult. For some, the expectations that they will learn and apply several different methods of addition, subtraction and multiplication to solving problems compounds their difficulties further. In lessons, there is a strong focus on pupils working

together; they check each other's work and learn to make helpful comments. The process strongly supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The developing links with a school in China help pupils to consider their own culture and compare it with that in China. The links the school council have with a school in London have done much to develop their understanding of respect for others' opinions and working together for a common purpose.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is almost always good and this is typical over time. Older pupils' behaviour is consistently good; they are good ambassadors for their school. They are very polite and friendly to those they know and respectful towards visitors. All parents and carers endorse the good standard of behaviour in the school. Pupils, themselves, think behaviour is good. The school provides a strong framework within which pupils can succeed in managing their own behaviour. For example, at lunchtimes, pupils have choices of where to spend their time, the playground, field or quiet garden. Sufficient staff are on hand so that pupils know that their behaviour is noted and if they need help, they can find staff quickly. However, pupils manage their own behaviour exceptionally well so that playtimes are very calm and sociable occasions. Over time, behaviour and attendance have improved. Attendance is above average. As a result of such initiatives as linking with a large company within the town, pupils have learned about the world of work and as a result, pupils' aspirations have risen. In discussions, many older pupils have their hopes set on getting a good job.

Pupils know about types of bullying, such as that which is cyber or racist. They are confident that there is no such bullying in the school and know that should they have concerns, any member of staff or of the anti-bullying group will help them.

Pupils say they enjoy school. Older pupils value opportunities to take on responsibilities such as being members of the anti-bullying group, or members of the school council. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe and are well aware of safety on the internet. Pupils new to the school say they like school and that staff and pupils are friendly and make them feel welcome. The breakfast club provides a calm and purposeful start to the day.

### **Leadership and management**

Good leadership and management together with an ambitious view for the school's future have ensured standards of attainment have risen steadily since the previous inspection. The school is well placed for continued improvement. The good curriculum promotes well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing a depth of very good opportunities for pupils to make choices, develop good self-esteem, leadership skills and understand the need for conservation. The headteacher ensures that staff undertake the professional development they need to address areas noted for improvement through good self-evaluation. However, on occasions, the senior team's monitoring of learning in lessons lacks rigour. As a result, teachers are not always helped to improve their practice promptly or make appropriate changes to what is taught in the 'set' groups in mathematics. Links with parents and carers are good. They are valued for the part they play as co-educators

of their children, for example, in helping with homework. A strength of the leadership of the school is how the parents and carers of pupils new to the school are quickly encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. This encouragement is of particular benefit to pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. The school tackles discrimination robustly and equality of opportunity is promoted effectively because the school knows how well different groups of pupils are learning. For example, the work of pupils new to the school is quickly assessed and, if necessary, specific help provided to ensure they achieve as well as their peers.

The governing body knows the school well and shares the headteacher's high aspirations for the school within its community. Safeguarding systems follow recommended good practice and meet government requirements.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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      | 46  | 46   | 8            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 47   | 40           | 5          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 38   | 40           | 8          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 48   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 15  | 50   | 29           | 5          |
| All schools          | 11  | 46   | 38           | 6          |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Attendance                 | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.   |
| Behaviour                  | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:     | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.  |
| 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. |
| Safety                     | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.             |

**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.**



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Old Heath Community Primary School, Colchester, CO2 8DD**

Thank you all for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your thoughts and ideas about it. This helped us to make our judgements about your school, which is providing you with a good education. The best things about the school were these:

- You enjoy school, make good progress and reach above average levels of attainment at the end of Year 6.
- Your behaviour is good and you work and play very well together.
- Everyone looks after you well and teachers usually make sure you have work to make you think hard.
- Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teachers lead and manage the school well.

There are some areas where the school can improve. I have asked your headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teachers and the governing body to:

- make sure that teaching is always good, especially for the younger pupils, so that it helps you make the best progress from the time you start in school
- make sure that in your maths 'sets' the work you have to do helps you make the best progress.

You already make a good contribution to the life of the school. You are very positive about learning and we were impressed with how welcoming you are to visitors and how sensible you are at playtimes. You can help the school improve even further by continuing to work hard.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Thompson  
Lead inspector

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