

John Bunyan Infant School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114818
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	378932
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2012
Lead inspector	Kath Beck

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Hill
Headteacher	Deborah Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2007
School address	Lancaster Way Braintree CM7 5UL
Telephone number	01376 321814
Fax number	01376 550979
Email address	admin@johnbunyan-inf.essex.sch.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.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 assesses 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 0300 123 4234, or email 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 information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Kath Beck

Additional inspector

Karen Heath

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by eight teachers and teaching assistants. They made short visits to sessions where pupils were receiving intensive support to learn mathematics, the sounds letters make and to read. Inspectors also observed a further eight short sessions accompanied by the headteacher. Some pupils read to and shared their work with inspectors. Meetings were held with parents, carers, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and staff. 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 a wide range of documentation including: reports from an independent adviser about the school's effectiveness; the school development plan; records that track pupils' progress; and records to show the monitoring of the quality of teaching. In addition, they looked at records of attendance and arrangements to secure pupils' health and safety. Inspectors analysed the responses of parents and carers to 82 questionnaires. They also analysed the response to questionnaires issued to staff and read notes written by the pupils.

Information about the school

This school is similar in size to the majority of primary schools. The number of pupils on roll is rising rapidly. Most pupils live within the immediate locality and come from White British families. Some come from other White or mixed White and Black African backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than that found in schools nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. An above average number of pupils have a statement of special education needs or have been identified as disabled or having special educational needs. Pupils' needs include physical, learning, behavioural, emotional, and speech and language difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a 52 part-time place Nursery, two Reception classes and one mixed Year 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage class. The percentage of pupils starting and leaving the school at other than the usual times is higher than the national picture. Middle leaders are taking on increased responsibilities until a new deputy headteacher is appointed.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Senior leaders, staff and the governing body share the determination to make a significant difference to pupils’ lives. Pupils are polite, caring and courteous to one another and to adults. They feel safe and their behaviour is good. These factors, together with rich, memorable experiences, and the school’s core values, enables pupils to thrive in an atmosphere of respect, and become confident, enthusiastic learners. One third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. All were fully supportive of the school. One wrote, ‘The school provides a safe, rich environment for all the children in our community. My children are happy and have flourished, as every child really does matter.’
- Most pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make good progress from their varied starting points. Attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is below the national picture. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with the national average.
- Extensive high quality resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), enable staff to enthuse, engage and motivate pupils to play and learn together. Numerous captivating, practical activities stimulate curiosity and encourage lively exchanges of ideas. That said, not all staff make the most of these opportunities to engage pupils fully in conversations that extend their language development.
- Staff provide all pupils with intensive one-to-one, or small group support in and out of lessons. This enables them to acquire the knowledge and skills they need at a good rate. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to apply their new learning independently in challenging situations.
- Many initiatives designed to meet pupils’ needs, especially in writing and mathematics have been implemented. Pupils’ work shows that these initiatives are proving successful. They have yet to be checked fully by middle managers, who have taken additional responsibility, for their precise impact on pupils’ attainment and progress.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By February 2013 raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by ensuring that all staff:
 - make the most of their interactions with pupils to extend their language development
 - offer challenging opportunities in which pupils apply their skills in writing and mathematics independently.
- Raise the skills of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives to enhance pupils' progress and raise attainment.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe, correctly, that their children make good progress regardless of their year group. The school's data show that pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points, even if they are at the school for only a short period of time. Staff use imaginative ideas to enable pupils to learn key skills in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as other subjects. The emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development in the Nursery sets the foundation for good learning habits as they move through the school. They sing songs to help remember the sounds letters refer to and make marks that represent their names. More able children, seeking the bones that 'Hairy Maclary' the dog had hidden in the flour, counted to six confidently. Reception children use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read and write simple sentences based on stories, such as 'The Lion and the Mouse,' that they know well.

In Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of numbers up to 100 and use a good range of resources to help them to work accurately. To broaden their vocabulary, staff share high quality stories and engage pupils in drama activities. These provide ideas for them to write about. Year 2 pupils take time to plan and draft their writing. After discussions with an adult they correct their work then write it up neatly and correctly. Through this process they develop the vocabulary to amuse the reader, especially in their stories about 'Super Heroes'. In other activities in all year groups, not all staff make the most of their interactions with pupils to extend their language development.

Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading is broadly similar to that found nationally. Adults listen to them read frequently and help them develop their comprehension of the story. Pupils who find learning to read difficult receive intensive individual support that enables them to overcome the barriers that are holding them back. Many parents and carers support their children by listening to them read at home.

Pupils who are identified as disabled, as having special educational needs or who are

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

new to speaking English are supported well and make good progress. Programmes are devised to meet their precise needs. Individual and small group work in mathematics is particularly successful. Activities in these sessions, such as counting how many times a ball can be thrown and caught, are fun and linked closely to daily life. Pupils are confident to apply skills learned in these sessions in the classroom.

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence supports the views of parents and carers who say that their children are taught well. The majority of teaching is good. Occasionally it is outstanding in small group and individual sessions in and out of the classroom. On these occasions staff draw on their expertise in working with pupils of this age to provide highly imaginative ideas that motivate them to want to learn. Often pupils are involved in planning their learning activities. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils wished to find out about animals. Using the internet they researched the habitats of animals in different parts of the world. Taking ideas from a book they were reading they decided to find out the best material for pyjamas for penguins. In another class pupils wanted to help 'Dr Who' find the sonic screwdriver he had lost. These activities promoted skills in ICT, problem solving, reading, writing and science in engaging ways.

Staff allow time for pupils to become engrossed in their activities. This is to help them develop resilience and perseverance. That said, some of these activities lack challenge and do not enable pupils to apply their skills in writing and mathematics without the help of an adult. In a very small number of satisfactory lessons, the pace slackened. Staff did not intervene soon enough to offer work of with an increased level of difficulty to those who completed the work quickly.

In small group or individual sessions, especially for pupils who are new to speaking English, have a disability or special educational needs, staff draw on accurate assessments and use well-judged teaching strategies to develop skills, especially in reading, at a rapid rate.

The majority of lessons promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly. They frequently collaborate, share their ideas and solve problems together. Their visits to places of interest and experiences such as exploration of the snow that fell the week of the inspection, give them opportunities to experience the wonders of the world. Stories generate conversations about issues of right and wrong.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a safe and well-ordered community because pupils show high levels of courtesy, engagement and collaboration. Parents, carers, pupils and staff are very positive about pupils' awareness of safety and their behaviour and say that this keeps learning on track. The wide variety of activities ensure that pupils always have plenty to interest them. Those who have been transferred from other schools settle

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

quickly. A very clear Code of Conduct that is often discussed emphasises the need for pupils to be fair, caring and respectful towards each other. Pupils are reminded how they can make wise choices to behave well or deal with social situations in an appropriate way. A large number of adults are always on hand for pupils to turn to if they need help, and to remind them of the consequences if they make the wrong choice. Occasionally though this means that pupils do not have the opportunity to manage their own behaviour in a responsible way. In a conversation one child said he had changed his behaviour since coming to the school because of the Code of Conduct, and because he liked joining in all the activities.

Robust procedures prevent bullying. There is much to occupy the pupils in purposeful play outside during breaks from lessons. Those who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to teach their classmates some words in their home language. Consequently pupils are confident in their relationships with others and eager to learn.

Pupils feel they are safe in school. Issues to do with safety are often included in the curriculum. For example, when learning about the Great Fire of London, pupils learned how to prevent fires happening and what to do if there is a fire. Levels of attendance are above the national average as pupils are keen to be in school. Staff are rigorous in following up the reasons for pupils' absence. The strong partnership the school has established with parents and carers means most pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

Leadership and management

The school is facing many new challenges. It is growing rapidly and the management structure is undergoing change. Training is underway for middle managers, who are taking on increasing levels of responsibility. Senior leaders work closely with a range of providers to check that initiatives to meet the increasing diversity of needs are implemented correctly. There is clear evidence of the general success of the initiatives, but the monitoring of their impact by middle leaders lacks the precision to ensure they have maximum effect.

Members of the governing body have considerable expertise, especially in education and finance. They are well-placed to offer informed challenge and support. This has made an important contribution to the high regard with which the school is rightly held in its local community. Efficient management of the budget has permitted the appointment of a wide range of additional staff. Some with specialist skills, in mathematics for example, bring a new dimension to pupils' learning.

A practical, imaginative curriculum provides pupils with memorable experiences that match their age, interests and needs well. Captivating activities promote good levels of behaviour and attendance. Several pupils wrote, 'I like school because it is fun and I like learning.' Pupils build up important skills and positive learning attitudes year-on-year that prepare them well for their future education. The school's core values, Code of Conduct and wide ranging programme are very effective in promoting pupils'

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

spiritual, moral and social development.

The school gives high priority to ensuring pupils' safety. Procedures and policies are reviewed regularly and all staff attend training in child protection. Parents and carers have confidence in the procedures. Senior staff work closely with a range of other professionals to ensure the safety of pupils, especially those whose circumstances are known to make them vulnerable. The school is fully inclusive with the result that there is no discrimination. Close observation of every child ensures all pupils benefit fully from what the school has to offer.

The school has sustained and built on the strengths from the previous inspection. Partnerships with parents and carers have improved significantly. An example of innovative practice is the setting up of conferences between individual teachers, children and their parents or carers. Together they discuss the child's achievements and the next steps in their learning. Home and school work together to benefit each child. The shared vision and commitment of all involved in the school indicate a good capacity to improve in the future.

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).

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.



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of John Bunyan Infant School and Nursery, Braintree, CM7 5UL

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed hearing about how much you enjoy school, listening to you read, and looking at your work. Your stories about 'Super Heroes' were very amusing and made us laugh. Some of you wrote to us, and those of you we spoke to said that everyone is friendly, you feel safe, and that all the grown-ups help you to learn a great deal. You like the special days when you go through the 'portal' that takes you back to the time of Florence Nightingale or The Great Fire of London. We were very pleased to see how you keep to your Code of Conduct. We noticed that you are fair, caring and respectful towards each other. You also make wise choices about how to behave. This helps all the adults to give you individual attention without being interrupted.

You go to a good school. Everyone wants you to be successful in your lives. As well as teaching you how to do well in your reading, writing and mathematics, the grown-ups help you to understand how important it is to develop personal qualities such as integrity, justice, responsibility and wisdom in your lives. You often talk about these matters in assembly and in your lessons. While we were in school you were talking about 'resilience.'

To make your school even better we have asked all the grown-ups to:

- give you some activities that are a little more difficult and require you to think carefully
- make time for you to do some writing and mathematics on your own
- help you to extend your skills in speaking so that you can all say what you want to say clearly
- check that the new ways they are using to teach you mathematics, and how to write stories, are helping you to do your very best.

We know that you will use your resilience to help in every way you can.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Beck
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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**