

# John Bunyan Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115007
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	378980
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Veronica Clark
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Woolmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	07 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Lancaster Way Braintree CM7 5UL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01376 320272
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<b>Email address</b>	admin@johnbunyan-jun.essex.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 September 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons, and nine teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, members of staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books and scrutinised a range of documentation, including safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also took into account the 45 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with questionnaires from pupils and staff.

During the inspection the team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The school's information about pupils' progress.
- The impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' achievement.
- The effectiveness of initiatives in improving teaching and learning and raising attainment.
- The rigour and accuracy of school self evaluation at all levels of leadership.

## Information about the school

John Bunyan is an average-sized school and draws its pupils from the local area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none is in the early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils, identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well above the national average. Their wide range of needs includes moderate learning difficulty or speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average.

**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

Although the overall effectiveness of John Bunyan Junior School is satisfactory; academic outcomes are improving and the school's measures to accelerate progress further are having a positive impact. As a result progress has improved and is now satisfactory. The declining trends in reading, writing and mathematics have been reversed. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average and rising in reading and mathematics. The school has taken careful steps to make provision increasingly effective. This has made improvements to the quality of teaching and to the rates of pupil progress, but these changes are not yet secure. For example, improvements in teaching have still to improve pupil progress in writing as much as they have in other key areas. This is because some pupils have not systematically developed the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation as they move through the school. The school recognises this is a barrier to more rapid progress. Pupils' progress in writing is further held back by the lack of opportunities for them to practise their writing skills during literacy lessons and as part of their work in other subjects

Whilst there are examples of good teaching, which are effective in securing good progress in learning, this is not yet secure enough to promote uniformly good progress. For example, in some lessons, the pace of learning slows and work is not closely matched to the learning needs of different groups of pupils, especially the more able. Remaining inconsistencies affecting progress are closely allied. Staff do not use information on how well pupils are doing with enough precision to raise aspirations and challenge pupils to work at levels of which they are capable. Nonetheless, pupils always try hard and are keen to learn.

Relationships and care provided for pupils are good and are at the heart of the work of the school. Teachers support vulnerable pupils effectively, which helps them to be ready for learning. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils confirm they are safe and well looked after. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

There is a strong commitment from all members of staff and governors to improve their effectiveness and impact. They are working with increased success to eradicate the legacy of underachievement and some inconsistencies that still exist across the school. Although it is too soon to be able to judge the effectiveness of leadership and management in driving up improvement as being better than satisfactory, the

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headteacher has effectively established her vision and successfully focused the drive for improvement. Her strong and competent leadership has brought about these important improvements in pupils' learning. She is well supported by the senior leaders and the governing body. Together they have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development and this is a key factor in the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

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

- Address the shortcomings already identified by the school in pupils' attainment in writing by:
  - systematically building pupils' basic skills of handwriting, punctuation and spelling as they move through the school.
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in literacy lessons and across subjects.
- Build on existing good practice seen in classes and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning by:
  - making consistently good use of assessment information to set work that closely matches pupils' differing abilities.
  - ensuring that expectations particularly for more able pupils are challenging and encourage pupils to aim for higher standards.

Up to 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**

Pupils enjoy being at school and demonstrate sensible and mature attitudes towards their learning. When given the opportunity, they work cooperatively with a partner or in groups. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make better, and now satisfactory progress in their learning from low starting points. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books shows that the decline in standards has been arrested; now pupils make best progress in reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing is improving, but is still not as high as it could be. Pupils' skills in the use of spelling, punctuation and presentation skills are weaknesses. Some effective practice is improving this. For example, in one lesson an exciting task which involved them working both independently and with others, helped pupils 'get under the character's skin' and by doing so, improved their writing. Increasingly pupils are writing accurately and convincingly, but they do not have enough opportunities to write creatively or at length in literacy lessons or in other subjects. Across the curriculum, too few more able pupils are reaching the National Curriculum levels expected of them.

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Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful towards others. The overwhelming majority of pupils report that they feel safe at school, confident that they can turn to an adult to sort out any concerns. Pupils know how to keep healthy; and the progress they make culturally, morally, socially and spiritually is satisfactory. Attendance is broadly average. The school council takes its role seriously and its members say their views are valued. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community, for example by acting as playground buddies. The satisfactory progress made in their basic academic skills means that they are appropriately prepared for the next stage in their education and later life.

*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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</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?**

Staff provide good levels of care, guidance and support and make a strong contribution to pupils' well-being, learning and sense of security. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good care and support, as do pupils whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable; the school involves all external agencies effectively to benefit pupils and families.

The quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment information to support learning are satisfactory and improving. Teaching is improving because regular monitoring by leaders has identified weaknesses and this has been tackled robustly. This is a key factor in pupils' accelerating progress. Good use is made of advice and

<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

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training provided by officers of the local authority. Recently introduced strategies that are proving successful in driving up standards include: daily language and guided reading sessions; earlier intervention for pupils identified as falling behind in their work; improvements in the use of assessment information and improvements in the quality of marking. In lessons where good teaching was observed, pupils responded well to stimulating activities with great enjoyment and good levels of concentration. The pace of learning was brisk and teachers' expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour were high. However, these aspects are not sufficiently secure across all classes. Planning is not always matched effectively to the personal needs of pupils and the range of abilities in the class; this is especially the case for the most able pupils. The pace of learning often slows and adults miss opportunities to demonstrate how pupils might extend their learning. The school has made adaptations to the teaching of writing skills, aimed at boosting achievement. These changes are yet to pay dividends because the skills of teachers in delivering the programmes effectively are still developing. Most lessons feature good relationships, sensitive encouragement from support staff, clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils, good classroom organisation and effective management of behaviour.

Following changes to the curriculum, the school is making writing more purposeful and interesting to pupils. There is an increase in the use of topic work which is successfully encouraging a cross-curricular approach to learning. These changes are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. The curriculum supports aspects of personal development well and is adequately matched to pupils' needs. There is a good range of visits, visitors and an increasing number of extra-curricular clubs, which effectively promote pupils' enjoyment and self-confidence.

*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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a strong lead and her persistent drive has been the key to developments made over the last two years. She has overseen improvements in pupils' learning and in the quality of teaching. Although she has taken some difficult decisions, she has bought about improvements in a positive way, so that she has the respect and loyalty of staff. Under her skilful leadership all staff are working as a team to address the issues that have held back pupils' attainment and achievements in the past. This has contributed effectively to the signs of improvement now appearing. While teaching remains satisfactory overall, there is more that is now

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good. The school's realistic self-evaluation has been the starting point for these improvements. The governing body have increased their involvement in the evaluation of the school's work and are now better placed to challenge leaders about the school's performance. Safeguarding arrangements are met and help ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Developing links with other local schools and parents and carers have made a positive contribution to improvements in pupil's progress. Parents and carers have an increasing awareness of the school's priorities and how they can contribute to them.

The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory, reflecting the variable teaching provision. The school recognises that in classes where teaching is satisfactory, higher ability pupils are not enabled to make the progress of which they are capable. Assessment data is carefully monitored and used in pupils' progress reviews to plan interventions and strategies to support those who are falling behind. As a result, gaps between different groups are narrowing. The school has a positive impact on the promotion of community cohesion within the school. Pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with each other. As yet plans to promote engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school are limited.

*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>

**Views of parents and carers**

A very large majority of parents and carers were of the view that their children enjoy school and that they were happy with their children's experiences. A small proportion of parents and carers expressed concerns about the way the school manages pupils' behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be often outstanding, especially in assemblies, and good overall. Several parents and carers have concerns about the



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progress their children are making. Inspectors found that progress has been slow for some pupils in the past but is now satisfactory overall. There are signs that it is improving, especially in mathematics. Inspectors agree that progress for those pupils who could do more challenging work is not yet as good as it should be. Many parents and carers made positive comments about the school and in particular the improvements the headteacher has made since her appointment. Comments include 'The new success has been due to a staff ready to be led by a warm, approachable and firm headteacher'. Inspectors fully agree with these positive views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at John Bunyan Junior 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	64	14	31	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	71	11	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	67	12	27	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	51	18	40	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	71	11	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	56	18	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	53	19	42	0	0	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)	20	44	22	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	64	13	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	56	17	38	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	49	21	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	62	15	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	76	8	18	1	2	0	0

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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



26 September 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of John Bunyan Junior School, Braintree, CM7 5UL**

Thank you for your warm welcome during the recent inspection. We enjoyed looking at your work, visiting your lessons, playtimes and assemblies and talking to so many of you. You helped us to find out the things your school does well, and what it needs to do in order to help you improve your work. We were impressed by the very positive attitudes that nearly all of you have to learning. Well done!

We found that John Bunyan Junior is a satisfactory school and that it is improving in many ways. We agree that your school is a happy place in which adults take good care of you. You behave well in lessons and say you feel safe and enjoy school. We found that the curriculum and teaching overall was satisfactory and that most of you are reaching standards that are broadly average. You make satisfactory progress at the moment and there are real signs of improvement. Here are some of the things that the inspectors have suggested can help. We believe that your writing can get better even more quickly if teachers:

- help you to improve your handwriting, spelling and punctuation little by little as you move from class to class.
- give you more chances to practise your writing skills.

We have also asked your headteacher and governors to make sure that all your lessons should be good or better, so that you can make at least good progress in your learning by encouraging your teachers to:

- use what they know about your learning to give you work that is not too easy or too hard but just right.
- make sure that you all work with activities that more closely match your needs especially for those of you who find some of your work easy.

You can all help by continuing to work hard. Thank you once again for your help during our visit, we wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce Lead Inspector

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