

Joydens Wood Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	137660
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	395565
Inspection dates	29–30 May 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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cynthia Jacobs
Headteacher	Jessica Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	December 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kath Beck

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Wollaston

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors attended an assembly and spent six hours observing teaching and learning by eight teachers and their teaching assistants. For some of this time, inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher. In addition, inspectors observed brief guided reading and phonics sessions and pupils read to them. Meetings were held with a small number of parents and carers, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors looked at the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. Not enough parents and carers had recorded their view through this survey for inspectors to use. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, records and reports about pupils' progress, and records to show the monitoring of the quality of teaching. In addition, they looked at records of attendance, arrangements to safeguard pupils' health and safety, and the school's website. Inspectors considered the responses of staff, and 130 parents and carers to questionnaires.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant school. Ten per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic families; very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low in comparison to schools nationally. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is low compared to the national average. Except for one mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class, pupils are taught in single age-groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of three Reception classes. Almost all children have attended pre-school provision before starting in Reception. There is a privately run breakfast and after-school club. This has a separate inspection and the report is found on the Ofsted website.

The day-to-day leadership and management structure and personnel have changed since the previous inspection. In November 2011, the school became an academy.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Joydens Wood Infant School is satisfactory. It is not good because of some underachievement by pupils in writing, and weaknesses in teaching and leadership and management. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment in Year 2 is above average. This is lower than at the time of the previous inspection, although it is on a significantly upward trend. Given that pupils have starting points that are above expected levels for their age, their progress is satisfactory. Pupils perform better in reading and mathematics than in writing. They do not build up their skills in handwriting steadily or have sufficient understanding of what they need to do to achieve highly in writing.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. In good lessons, especially in Reception, work builds effectively on pupils' previous learning, challenges them to do well and is matched to their abilities. This is not consistent across the school. Often pupils receive advice about how to complete a task, rather than ways to improve their work. They do not always have time to answer questions teachers pose when work is marked.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and they treat each other and staff with respect. They have insufficient opportunities to show their skills in managing their own behaviour. Good provision for pupils' welfare keeps them safe. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. While middle leaders have undergone training to enhance their skills and are involved in monitoring the quality of teaching, they do not concentrate sufficiently on its links with pupils' learning. School improvement planning supports key developments that are also included in performance management targets. However, the development plan lacks specific targets, timescales and success indicators to improve outcomes for pupils, making it difficult for the governing body to challenge the school's performance rigorously.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and levels of attainment in writing by:
 - ensuring all pupils form and join their letters consistently and correctly and apply the skills learned in specific handwriting lessons in all their work
 - providing pupils with examples of writing that demonstrate higher levels of attainment so they understand what they need to do to achieve as well as they can.
- By July 2013, raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and enhances the rate of pupils' learning, especially in Years 1 and 2, by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and offering challenging work
 - using assessment procedures to ensure that work builds effectively on what pupils have learned before and matches their abilities, particularly the more able
 - providing feedback throughout lessons that gives pupils a full picture of how they can improve their work
 - giving time for all pupils to respond to the questions teachers pose when marking their work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing further the skills of middle managers, particularly in lesson observation, so that they have a greater impact on improving the outcomes for pupils
 - sharpening the school development plan so that it includes specific targets and timescales for improvement
 - including in the school development plan precise success indicators that enable members of the governing body to monitor the success of initiatives and challenge the school robustly about its performance.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter school with skills and knowledge above those that are normally expected at the age of four. Currently, in Reception children make good progress, especially in learning the sounds that letters make through imaginative activities. They relish the challenge to write simple sentences on their own. These skills enable them to get off to a good start in reading. The attainment of the present five-year-olds is above, and in some cases significantly above, that expected nationally.

Attainment has declined from the high level found at the time of the previous inspection. Data from the school show that it has taken effective action, bringing about a notable rise in attainment in reading and mathematics over the last two years. Attainment in writing has risen from average to above average this year. Current attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average, but not yet at the same level as in 2007.

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There are more boys than girls in the school. Girls outperform boys in all subjects. Initiatives to motivate boys to want to write through stories about 'Super heroes', and for girls to do better at mathematics by working with older girls from a secondary school, are proving successful. That said, specific weaknesses remain in writing. Teachers do not consistently model the same writing style. Pupils are not always reminded how to form their letters correctly. When they begin to join their letters in specific lessons, they do not transfer these skills to their day-to-day work. Imaginative ideas motivate pupils to want to write, but, for example, when asked to write letters to those they wished to invite to the Queen's Jubilee Party, they received insufficient advice about what they needed to do to write a high quality letter.

In their responses to the questionnaires, the majority of parents and carers said that their children make good progress. Inspection findings show that progress for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and not better because they do not always have sufficient demands placed on them. For example, feedback in lessons is linked to agreed success criteria. For writing in Year 1, this included using capital letters and full stops, but the same criterion is used in Reception. Some Year 2 lessons observed in literacy and mathematics underestimated the capability of the pupils and offered little challenge, especially to the more able.

Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make good progress in their personal development. One-to-one and small group work enables some to make good progress in learning to read, but generally their progress is satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory and not better because pupils are not challenged sufficiently or consistently to reach higher levels of attainment. This is also the view of a very small number of parents, although most strongly agree that teaching is good.

The curriculum, especially the current project to promote skills in decision-making, problem solving and independence, entuses pupils so they are eager to learn. However, objectives and success criteria are the same for all pupils in each lesson and tasks are not always matched to needs. Activities for more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always ask enough of them because teachers do not use assessment information well enough to make sure tasks build on previous learning. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were solving problems about the number of pieces of two or three kinds of fruit they could use to make a fruit salad. Pupils had to make a salad of 22 pieces with three fruits. They had to combine numbers provided by teachers to add up to 22. While this involved and challenged most of the pupils, work from earlier in the year showed that several of the more able pupils are capable of calculating much higher numbers.

The best marking gives pupils a clear view of what they do well and what they need to learn next, but this is not consistent. In their marking, teachers pose questions, but few give pupils the time to respond or to correct errors.

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The picture is better in Reception, where teaching is mostly good. Staff use information from frequent observations and children's interests to provide opportunities to work on demanding activities designed to extend their learning. For example, more able children thought up a story while playing with a castle. They used their game to write imaginative stories, confidently applying their phonics skills to record their ideas independently.

Across the classes, staff trained to assist pupils with very specific disabilities and special educational needs are skilled at helping them to remain involved in lessons, and to make satisfactory, if sometimes very small, steps in their learning.

Teachers emphasise the acquisition of a wide range of reading skills, such as phonics, clues from the text and picture, and recognition of whole words. These, together with support from parents who listen to their children read at home, contribute well to pupils' higher levels of achievement in reading.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are cooperative, friendly and respectful to one another and to staff. Mealtimes contribute significantly to their social development, where they enjoy sharing their news. Pupils take pride in doing their best, setting out their work neatly and tidily. These factors contribute to the school's happy atmosphere.

Behaviour is good and not outstanding because high levels of adult supervision mean pupils have limited opportunities to demonstrate the skills of managing their own behaviour. Occasionally, they find it hard to sustain their concentration when sitting for too long on the carpet, or they talk for too long in their groups, making it difficult for others to get on with their work.

The school cares very well for its pupils, working in close partnership with parents and carers to resolve concerns. Inspection findings support the views of parents and carers that their children are safe in school and that there is no evidence of systematic bullying of any kind. Parents, carers and pupils are made fully aware of how to stay safe when using the internet. Within the curriculum, pupils learn to stay safe when crossing the road and pond dipping, and to tell an adult if they are worried.

The school's refusal to approve pupils' absence from school and its successful work with other professionals means attendance is above average. There has been no persistent absence this year.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. They are not good because the high levels of attainment in national tests and pupils' progress found previously have not been sustained, although they are on a significantly upward trend. Action taken to improve assessments in Reception, a key issue at the time of the previous inspection,

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has proved effective. To prevent outcomes in Year 2 declining further, the school took successful action. By working in partnership with other schools, with outside providers, and implementing national initiatives, it has brought about improved levels of attainment. These have set a solid foundation for future improvement. The findings from an independent audit on improving writing, matching those found during the inspection, have yet to be implemented fully.

All those with leadership responsibilities monitor the quality of teaching. The focus for these observations is mostly descriptive of what teachers do, rather than on the gains made by pupils in lessons. Middle leaders have undergone training for their roles, but it has not included a strong focus on observing teaching and its links to pupils' progress and outcomes. Consequently they identify few areas for improvement and have an overly optimistic view of the quality of teaching.

All staff undergo performance management. Targets linked to outcomes for pupils are included in those set for teachers, but not for teaching assistants who often work with the same pupils. Training is targeted effectively to meet individual and school needs, including the management of pupils on the autistic spectrum.

The recently introduced curriculum encourages pupils to collaborate. It helps them to think about moral dilemmas, such as what might be done if the Queen's party organiser became unwell. Pond dipping, singing, playing percussion instruments and working in the style of a wide range of famous artists adds to their cultural understanding and appreciation of the world around them. While the curriculum supports the application of literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills across a range of subjects, it does not offer sufficient stimulus to higher achievers. This has an impact on pupils' equality of opportunity to achieve as well as they can, as staff are not ensuring that the tasks within it fully meet their needs. Senior leaders are effective in addressing any issues of discrimination. Staff in Reception make the most of limited space to promote children's learning successfully inside and outside.

The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements to safeguard pupils, ensuring all involved with the school, including volunteers, are suitable to work with children. Through their regular monitoring programme, members of the governing body are familiar with the school's provision. The school development plan identifies important areas for improvement, but does not include targets that are clearly measurable, making it hard for members of the governing body to challenge sufficiently the school's performance.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Joydens Wood Infant School, Bexley DA5 2JD

Thank you for being helpful and friendly when we visited your school recently. You behave well and are enthusiastic to try out new ideas. You told us you like coming to school and enjoy solving problems, especially trying to find the Queen's Jewels when they had got lost, and organising her Diamond Jubilee Party. We enjoyed eating our lunch with you and hearing your own plans to celebrate the Jubilee. We hope you had a lovely time.

Your school is satisfactory at the moment, but the grown-ups are determined to make it the best it can be for you. We have asked everyone to:

- help you to improve your handwriting, especially when you begin to join your letters
- show you how to make your writing more varied and interesting to readers, and use the correct 'writing voice' and punctuation
- give you work that makes you think hard and learn more quickly
- check that the work you are given each day takes into account what you have learned before and is always matched to your abilities, especially for those of you who find the work easy
- give you good advice about how to improve your work, and time to respond to the questions teachers ask you when marking your work
- check that the plans they have made to improve the school, and the work of the subject leaders, are helping you to achieve as well as you can.

We know that you will help by concentrating hard and using all the skills you have already learned when work becomes more demanding.

Yours sincerely

Kath Beck
Lead inspector

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