

# Pitsea Junior School

High Road, Pitsea, Basildon, SS13 3AB

## Inspection dates

10–11 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Teaching is good. Lessons are well organised. Teachers make sure all pupils are challenged to learn as much as they can.
- In one third of lessons outstanding teaching led to the pupils making rapid progress.
- Effective checking of how well teachers help pupils to learn has improved pupils' progress and raised standards.
- Teachers understand what pupils can do and what they need to learn. They use this information well to set targets and track how well pupils are making progress. Pupils make good progress from when they enter the school in Year 3 to when they leave in Year 6.
- Pupils at risk of not doing well make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress because effective care and support helps them to learn. Additional government funding (the Pupil Premium) has been used effectively.
- Pupils behave well and say they feel safe and 'love it here'. Parents recognise the great deal of attention the staff give to caring for pupils.
- Attendance is high.
- The headteacher and her senior team have high expectations of staff and pupils. The headteacher's drive and ambition have been the key factors in the rapid progress pupils are making.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of the pupils' writing requires further improvement particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Opportunities to involve pupils in discussion and to teach them how to work by themselves are sometimes missed.
- Information on pupil progress has not been agreed with feeder schools. This slows the progress of pupils when they join the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The school was contacted at noon on the day before the inspection. Inspectors observed 12 lessons and saw every teacher at work on two occasions and conducted joint observations with senior staff. All staff were offered professional feedback on their lessons.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. HMI met with the parents and guardians of pupils when they brought pupils to school in the morning.
- The inspection team looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) throughout the inspection but no responses had been recorded.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by school including the minutes of the governing body meetings and the responses to the staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

David Jones, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Lewis	Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school was inspected in July 2011 and given a notice to improve. HMI visited the school in January 2012 and looked carefully at the quality of teaching and the pupil progress. The inspector noted that the school had made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report.

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average junior school. The large majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national figure; the proportion who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils who have special educational needs is above average, as is the number of pupils who need extra help.
- There are a number of children who are looked after by the local authority and others at risk of not doing well in each year group who receive additional support funded by the Pupil Premium.
- The school is a member of the Basildon Education Schools Trust (BEST).
- The school meets the current standards expected by the government (floor targets).

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

- Improve the quality of the pupils writing by:
  - placing more emphasis on how well pupils speak and listen in every lesson
  - making consistent use of visual material (pictures/video) to inspire pupils to do more interesting writing.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring all staff use questions effectively to develop the depth of pupils' answers and to build greater understanding.
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to work by themselves and with others on activities to help them improve their problem solving skills.
- The governing body must seek support from the local authority to ensure that information received about pupils' progress when they join the school is accurate.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Standards have risen. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in English is close to the national average. In mathematics the proportion is just above average.
- All pupils make good progress from their different starting points because teachers have high expectations of what pupils need to learn. Where teaching is outstanding pupils make rapid progress because question and answer sessions require the pupils to think carefully whilst effectively guiding the quality of their work.
- Standards of writing do not always reach the level expected for the pupils' age, notably in Years 3 and 4. This is because of their low skills on entry. Where individuals' vocabulary is limited they do not write as well as they could for their age and the school has introduced effective support and guidance.
- Many pupils have limited reading skills when they join the school. Effective teaching and extra support has helped most pupils to improve their reading to the level expected for their age or ability.
- An effective programme of testing and support means the school has accurate information on how well each pupil can read. As a result, teachers plan their lessons to meet pupils' learning needs, set targets and check effectively how well pupils are doing.
- Pupils who need extra support and those with disabilities make good and often better progress than the majority because of the quality of care they get in school and the extra support to help them learn. The additional government funding provided by the Pupil Premium is used well to improve the pupils' social skills and their reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- Pupils make good progress in every lesson because teachers set the work at the right level and give extra help in small groups for those who sometimes struggle. A good mix of materials and activities support learning well.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Inspectors judged all lessons to be at least good. A third were outstanding. Teachers and support staff listen carefully to the pupils' ideas and adjust tasks to improve learning. In the very best lessons, careful questioning and opportunities to think and discuss key ideas in depth, help pupils to make outstanding progress. In these lessons strong use of visual materials and clear examples help develop the quality of language and accuracy used by the pupils.
- In these very strong lessons the pupils' contributions are very important. In an outstanding physical education lesson three different activities developed the pupils' soccer skills to a high level. The pupils' attitudes to learning, their support and coaching of each other, and the well managed activity were outstanding. Good aerobic exercise and appropriate health and safety guidance was built effectively by the teacher around the contributions from the pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those in need of extra help are included and supported well in every activity and all lessons. Good support and appropriate resources ensure they make good progress.
- Teachers and leaders use information on the pupils' progress accurately to plan lessons and

provide effective individual and small group support.

- All lessons are well planned. Some lessons are not outstanding because, although they help pupils make good progress, not enough time is given to teaching pupils to work by themselves or to solve problems.
- Teachers use the school's computers and other technology effectively to bring new ideas and improve pupils' understanding in their lessons.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Attendance is high and the parents, who spoke to when they brought their children to school, often said they 'think this school is great'. All parents said their child was happy and felt safe.
- Behaviour is good in lessons, in the corridors and during playtimes. The pupils have been involved in all decisions about their behaviour; those who spoke to inspectors were keen to say how quickly action is taken if anything happens. Pupils were quick to point out that any bullying was dealt with quickly.
- Disabled pupils are well supported by staff and were pleased to say 'how caring people are'. In lessons inspectors noted the support pupils were quick to offer those in need of extra help.
- The pupils have regular opportunities to say what they think about any aspect of school life and appreciate the opportunity to offer their ideas about how misbehaviour should be managed.
- Pupils want to learn and to do well. They really enjoyed a story telling session that was part of Black History Week.
- Pupils have clear social and moral views of what is right and wrong.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher returned from a secondment a year before the school was given a notice to improve at the last inspection. During her absence the attainment and progress of all pupils had become a concern to the governing body.
- The HMI monitoring visit highlighted the weaknesses evident in the data about pupils' progress when they joined the school. Rapid progress has been made in establishing an accurate view of the pupils' attainment; in particular their reading ages. This has been at the core of the headteacher's drive to improve teaching and support for pupils who need extra help.
- The headteacher and the senior team consistently share their high expectations and this has been a key factor in the improvement in teaching. Senior leaders joined inspectors in the joint observation of teaching and the views they offered matched the judgements given by HMI. Senior leaders have managed significant staff change very well since the last inspection. Staff and pupils have a positive opinion of the headteacher's efforts and leadership.
- The checking of teaching, and how well pupils learn as a result, is accurate and effective. The senior leadership team observe teaching regularly so they understand what teachers need to do to improve and how successful teachers are in making their teaching better.
- A great deal has been done to improve the range of subjects pupils learn. The cultural and

spiritual aspects of topics such as, 'Witchsea School' and Black History week have enriched the teaching of reading and writing.

- Effective help has been provided by the local authority to support changes in staffing and improve the teaching of reading and mathematics. Newly qualified staff have been well supported by the school and the local authority.
- The governance of the school:
  - Governors are effective in challenging the headteacher about what needs to be done to improve how well pupils learn. The performance management targets they set for the headteacher are linked well to the progress pupils make and, as a result, achievement has improved. Governors manage the school's budget efficiently. As a result, finances are secure and new equipment and computers have been bought. A breakfast club is available for pupils and action has been taken to provide safe access to a neighbouring after-school care provision.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114807
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	398174

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

<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>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	R Claxton
<b>Headteacher</b>	A Blant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6th July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 553174
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