

Janet Duke Primary School

Markhams Chase, Laindon, Basildon, SS15 5LS

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school.
- Opportunities are missed in the marking of pupils' work to explain exactly what needs to be done to improve the work still further. This is especially the case in writing in subjects other than English.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons that challenge pupils of all abilities. As a result, sometimes work is too easy for potentially higher attaining pupils so that they do not make good progress.
- Pupils do not always have sufficient information to enable them to check their own work in order to know how well they are doing.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership of the school has a determination to raise standards, which has already resulted in many significant improvements, including improving the quality of teaching and raising attendance.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress in lessons.
- The care taken of all pupils ensures that they feel well looked after and safe, so can concentrate fully on their work.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. As a result, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Support for pupils who might be at risk of falling behind, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good and as a result, the progress of these pupils equals and sometimes exceeds that of their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, six of which were joint observations with the Headteacher and the two deputy headteachers.
- Teachers' planning for lessons and assessments of pupils' work were scrutinised. In addition, samples of pupils' workbooks were examined.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 64 staff questionnaire responses. Meetings were held with groups of pupils and some parents spoken to.
- Senior staff and subject leaders were interviewed.
- Governors, including the chair and vice chair were spoken to, as well as a representative of the Basildon Education Services Trust, which provides training for local schools and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, data on the progress of current students, safeguarding policies and procedures and records of exclusions, incidents of behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Sheelagh Barnes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Heather Housden

Additional Inspector

Richard Moody

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.

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than average for a primary school.
- It was formed in 2010 by the amalgamation of the previous infant and junior schools.
- The great majority of the pupils, a higher proportion than average, come from White British backgrounds with very few from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requiring school action is higher than average. The proportion requiring external support ('school action plus') or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly higher than average. These pupils have mainly moderate learning difficulties and some behavioural difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium – additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families – is above average.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. About half of the teaching staff are new to the school since that time.
- The school meets the current floor standards set by government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning to at least good, by:
 - ensuring that lessons are planned to fully challenge pupils of all abilities
 - making sure that teachers consistently follow the school marking policy, including telling pupils, in all subjects in which they write, explicitly what they need to do to improve their writing
 - involving pupils more fully in understanding the things they need to consider when checking the quality of their work and that of others, so that they can take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Progress is not yet sufficiently rapid or sustained in all year groups to bring about good achievement although it has accelerated sharply since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be inadequate.
- Due to the high quality of leadership and management in improving teaching, progress is good or even excellent on occasion. However, there is still too much that requires improvement.
- Children join the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are below what is typical for their age. Progress is not good, so that in Year 1, in the phonic check (on how well pupils know the links between letters and the sounds that they represent) results were much lower than the national average in 2012, and pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is usually below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Key Stage 2 in 2012, the success of the work to make teaching better led to a considerable improvement in standards compared with the previous year. Attainment rose to broadly average overall. In English, although it rose, it was still below average. A smaller proportion of pupils than average attained the higher level 5, in English and mathematics.
- School data indicates that progress has continued to accelerate and is now often good. Pupils are on track to improve on the school's 2012 results as the school continues to recover from the backlog of underachievement noted by the previous inspection report.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics has started to accelerate because of the work school leaders have done recently to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence in these aspects of pupils' learning. Whilst achievement over time in English and mathematics still requires improvement, the progress pupils are currently making is more rapid than before. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics have improved and are now good.
- Groups of pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make progress in reading writing and mathematics which is at least in line with their peers and with similar groups of pupils nationally. On occasion it is slightly better. In 2012, attainment in English for pupils supported by the pupil premium was nearly four terms behind the others in the class, and in mathematics it was nearly three terms. Teaching assistants support small groups or individuals effectively to enable them to make progress, which is continuing to accelerate. The gap in achievement is being systematically reduced because progress has accelerated.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching at the time of the previous inspection was not good enough to ensure that pupils made adequate progress in Key Stage 2. Although it has improved, due to the sharply focused work of leaders and managers, it is not yet leading to pupils' good achievement.
- Much of the most recent teaching is good and is leading to good progress. However, lesson planning, especially in Key Stage 2, does not always ensure that pupils of different abilities are sufficiently challenged. As a result, the progress of some more-able pupils requires improvement.

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work follows the school policy closely in the great majority of cases. Positive comments and encouragement are made. However, points for improvement are sometimes very brief and in the case of writing in subjects other than English, opportunities are missed to explain to pupils how to improve their work.
- Some teachers clearly indicate to pupils the criteria for higher grades, thus enabling them to assess their own work and that of others accurately, as was seen in a lesson on writing for pupils in Year 2. However, this is not the case in all classes. As a result, although some pupils can say what levels they have attained, they are not clear about the next step and so are unsure how to reach the next level, and are therefore prevented from taking greater responsibility for their own learning.
- The school prioritised improving the teaching of mathematics because leaders correctly identified that pupils needed to make better progress. Training was provided for staff and extra resources purchased. As a result, many aspects of the teaching of mathematics have improved significantly, although it is still not yet consistently good.
- The school responded swiftly to the low results in 2012 of the phonics check for Year 1. Phonics teaching is now much more effective. Careful teaching and support enable children to gain a good start in acquiring literacy skills. School assessments indicate that the results of this year's check are likely to be much closer to average.
- Teaching assistants are effective when running small group sessions or supporting individuals or groups in class. They enable pupils to use their developing skills in a good range of reading and writing and mathematical activities. Sessions organised to help pupils catch up with reading have had a positive impact on the progress pupils make.
- Teachers' use of questioning to elicit pupils' understanding and to promote learning is a strength across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In lessons pupils are well behaved; so much so that on occasion their behaviour is exemplary. This contributes effectively to the progress made in learning at these times. For example, in a lesson on writing in a reception class, children maintained very high levels of concentration on their task for a significant period. They worked with silent determination without the need for adult intervention.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and to learning. Because of this, their attention is maintained, even when the pace of lessons slows slightly. They are courteous and polite and move around the school in a sensible manner.
- Pupils develop as responsible and caring members of the school community through school and class councils. Their care for more vulnerable members of the school community is automatic.
- Most parents whose views were expressed said that they feel that their children are safe and cared for in school. Pupils have good safety awareness. They handle equipment and use the internet safely. They are aware of the various forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, they say they are confident that any problems they have can be shared with staff and resolved.
- A majority of parents say that behaviour is good. Pupils say that bullying or prejudice is rare and that disagreements are usually resolved quickly.

- Staff management of the behaviour of pupils is good. There is a consistent approach within the school. As a result, the school provides a positive and industrious environment and pupils try their hardest to conform to the high expectations of staff. The work to reduce absence has resulted in a measurable improvement in attendance figures. However, these are still below average.

The leadership and management are good

- The long standing under-achievement of older pupils has now been tackled effectively by leaders. Standards are rising because teaching is improving under the good leadership.
- The school has had effective support in this from the local authority which has provided appropriate training and advice. Training has also been provided by the Basildon Education Support Trust. In recent months the support from the local authority has been steadily reduced, as the school has demonstrated an increased capacity to instigate and manage its own improvement.
- School self-evaluation indicates that the headteacher and governors are aware of the strengths of the school and the most important priorities for improvement. As a result, leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning and this has led to accelerating the progress pupils make, particularly in mathematics, where progress is now often good.
- There has been a successful push to improve teaching and learning in phonics. This has had already measurably increased the progress younger pupils, in particular, now make; which, in turn, has had a positive impact on the progress they make in learning to read and write.
- Pupils are taught a good range of subjects and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about the thoughts and views of others. Regular visits are arranged to places of interest, such as the Natural History Museum.
- The diligent focus on spending pupil premium money wisely has resulted in particularly good acceleration in the progress made by these pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils generally equal and sometimes exceed the progress made by their friends.
- Safety and safeguarding are given suitably high emphasis and all requirements are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The efficiency of the governing body has been improved since the previous inspection, through training, guidance and the determination of all members. Governors provide school leaders with effective support and realistic challenge. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education provided and check carefully that this continues to improve.
 - Governors ensure that resources are used to best effect, including checking the impact of the spending, for instance, of the pupil premium money.
 - The governing body has contributed to the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, taking their responsibility for the management of performance of staff very seriously. Evaluation of the quality of teaching is linked both to salary progression and also to pupils' achievements.
 - Governors have become more actively involved in monitoring than previously and are confident to question and challenge. This rigour, combined with a good understanding of the

school's strengths and areas for improvement, has supported the headteacher well and led to more effective analysis and planning for development.

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

Unique reference number	114993
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	399680

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	577
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Spicer
Headteacher	Harriet Phelps-Knights
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2012
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