

# Chater Junior School

Addiscombe Road, Watford, WD18 0WN

**Inspection dates** 20–21 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Teaching across the school is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers' expectations are high. They plan lessons that challenge and extend all groups of pupils.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school so that, by the end of Year 6, almost all are expected to reach and a high proportion are on track to exceed the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics.
- Pupils have superb attitudes to learning. They get on very well together and their relationship with adults is excellent, with the result that behaviour in and around the school is outstanding.
- The headteacher and senior leaders, supported by the governing body, are dedicated to maintaining and improving the school. The quality of teaching in mathematics, in particular, has improved since the last inspection.
- A great strength of the school is the emphasis it places on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a feature in every subject and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development by consistently promoting their care and respect for each other.
- Governors are well informed and support the school exceptionally well. They hold the school to account about the progress all pupils make and the link to the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight teachers.
- Joint observations were conducted with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books and a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and were escorted around the school by groups of pupils.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of the 12 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View were considered, along with a number of emails sent by parents and carers

## Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Greevy

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized junior school.
- Pupils are from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds and the majority speak English as an additional language.
- A number of pupils join the school other than at the start of Year 3.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have educational special needs who are supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is slightly higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below the national average. This is additional government funding which, at this school, is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress for pupils at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.

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

- Continue to narrow the gap between English and mathematics across the school by sharing and modelling the best practice in teaching and learning across the school, including in the way that work is marked.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Almost all pupils are making rapid progress in relation to their various starting points. These starting points have risen for pupils currently in the younger year groups but they have been below average since the last inspection for pupils in Year 6. Progress is outstanding in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped to average after the last inspection, but the school's data shows that attainment for the current Year 6 is well above average, as is attainment in Years 3 to 5. Almost all pupils in Year 6 this year are expected to attain the nationally expected level in English and more than 90% are expected to reach this level in mathematics. In both subjects, around 60% are expected to attain the higher Level 5, which is a much higher proportion than seen nationally. A small proportion of pupils are expected to attain Level 6 in mathematics, which is an indicator of just how far this subject has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' work in lessons, and from their books, confirms this picture of above-average attainment throughout the school.
- Pupils read with interest and show an enthusiasm for books. Reading is promoted well, with the result that reading standards are high. Year 6 pupils who read to inspectors read accurately, fluently and with expression. Writing is well presented and grammar is accurate.
- As the last inspection indicated, progress in mathematics has previously been slower than in English. However, recent initiatives and training have resulted in a marked improvement and a closing of the gap. Recent improvement to the application of mental arithmetic has shown an immediate increase in pupils' recall of number facts and multiplication. This gives a firm foundation to pupils' understanding of mathematical problems as they move through the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make exceptional progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants carefully track how well they are learning to match activities to their individual learning needs. They do very well because they greatly enjoy these stimulating and fun activities.
- Pupils who join the school other than at the start of Year 3 are very well supported and so make the same excellent progress as their classmates.
- In 2012, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were around two terms behind their classmates in English and a term behind in mathematics. Pupil premium funding for these pupils is used effectively to pay for short-term, early support programmes and one-to-one teaching. As a result, these pupils make notably better progress than similar pupils nationally in both English and mathematics.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations for their pupils. Their subject knowledge is excellent, with the result that teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. The school's monitoring of teaching, confirmed by inspection findings, show that the majority of teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers provide challenging activities which have purpose and relate to life skills. For example,

Year 6 pupils were drawing on what they had learnt across a range of subjects to persuade a supermarket to buy their greeting cards. This required market research to find popular shapes, designs and colour combinations, as well as working out costs and how to advertise. All of this information was then presented to the class, who gave constructive advice on how to improve the presentation. Pupils used touch-screen tablet computers to try out different slogans or jingles to enhance their presentations.

- Pupils learn and develop rapidly because teachers track their progress regularly and accurately in lessons and quickly move them on to the next steps. Teaching assistants are also involved with monitoring pupils and work closely with teachers to ensure that every child makes fast progress.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and to develop their vocabulary through drama and 'hot seating' in lessons, where they answer questions in role. For example, in a Year 4 class, two pupils acted a scene from the text they had read about a dilemma. This required a good level of comprehension and empathy for the characters in the text. Classmates were then given the opportunity to 'freeze' the actions to ask for clarification of what had been said. Pupils were able to do this with a great deal of maturity.
- Positive relationships contribute significantly to the development of pupils' self-confidence and to build self-esteem. There is a culture throughout the school that pupils learn best by making mistakes, so they are confident and unafraid to try out new ways of learning. 'Talk partners' and the use of whiteboards help pupils to check their own learning and that of their peers. Pupils work cooperatively in groups.
- Pupils' understanding is developed and deepened by the use of excellent questioning skills used by both teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are encouraged to arrive at their own answers through this skilful questioning.
- Marking is consistent and offers guidance as to the next steps in learning to improve work. Most teachers set up an ongoing dialogue through marking and give pupils time to respond. This very positive feature is not yet consistent in all classes.

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

- Behaviour in and around the school is exemplary. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and excitedly speak not only about their class activities but also about that of the other classes which they have seen in displays or in assembly. Their enthusiasm contributes greatly to their rapid progress in lessons.
- Pupils display a great deal of consideration for each other and are polite to adults and visitors. Pupils open doors for each other and for adults, and can be heard to say 'please' and 'thank you' readily without prompting.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that bullying is very rare, and school logs support this. Pupils understand cyber-bullying and inappropriate use of mobile phones and text messaging. They know how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and are proud of their school.
- Pupils take on roles such as school councillors and 'eco warriors'. They take responsibility for, and read regularly to, pupils in the infant school. Children are responsible for using the projector in assembly and act as peer buddies in the playground. Eco warriors are very aware of environmental issues and take pride in looking after the school vegetable garden.

- Staff manage any challenging behaviour very well. There have been no racist incidents or exclusions in the last three years. Much of this must be attributed to the emphasis that the school places on social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. It is a common theme in writing, assemblies and in role play to explore and understand emotions and the feelings of others.
- Parents and carers are happy with the school and a recent questionnaire showed that the vast majority of parents felt that behaviour was very good.
- Pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Attendance has improved this year and is above average.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher, the senior leaders and the governors share a common vision for the school. They are ambitious for the pupils to do well in a safe and happy environment. They are very much a team and teachers at all levels know they have a part to play in maintaining high standards. Morale is high and staff are highly motivated.
- Processes for monitoring and developing staff are rigorous and consistent. They empower staff to develop and excel in their high-quality teaching skills. All staff are committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for all pupils. Rigorous systems are in place to check the quality of teaching, and teachers are fully accountable for the progress their pupils make. There is a strong emphasis on professional training and development. Teachers' effectiveness is clearly linked to their pay and career progression.
- The pupil premium funding is allocated effectively to focus on the literacy and numeracy needs of eligible pupils. Senior leaders constantly check the suitability of the additional support to ensure that it has the desired impact in accelerating pupils' progress.
- Pupils' learning is greatly enriched by teaching that links a number of subjects together. For example, the work of George Seurat on pointillism was linked to information and communication technology (ICT) and displayed outside the new ICT suite. Each class has an adopted country and pupils email each other to find out what they can about each other's countries, acknowledging differences and similarities, and dispelling stereotyping. Pupils in Year 5 link with a local Jewish school. Themed weeks, international days, visits to local places of educational interest, for instance the Planetarium and Hampton Court, and visits to places of religious worship of other faiths, all make an excellent contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. This is a school where equal opportunity is at the forefront of all that staff do.
- The local authority offers its standard support for the school of three visits per year. It recognises the school's many outstanding features. Visits are focused and validate the school's own self-evaluation and, at the school's request, check the accuracy of the school's tracking and use of data. This support helps to keep senior leaders and subject managers fully up to date with current developments.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows the school extremely well. Its members visit classes regularly. Governors are attached to subject areas and classes. They regularly talk to senior leaders and subject managers at governing body meetings and on other occasions about progress in their subject or areas of responsibility. In this way, governors keep abreast of developments and

question any misunderstanding or any slippage. Governors are highly effective at managing the finances. They ensure that teachers' pay is linked to the progress of their pupils. They buy in training offered by the local authority to ensure that they are fully up to date. The governing body holds the headteacher to account and seeks the assistance of the local authority to ensure that performance management targets are robust. They are aware of how the pupil premium money is spent and the impact it is having on this group of pupils. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are robustly implemented.

## 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>	117158
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	413272

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>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sohbat Ali
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter McEntee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 446686
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