

# Dame Janet Primary Academy

Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 6QY

## Inspection dates

25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching across the academy varies in quality and not enough of it is good.
- Teachers' questions do not always deepen pupils' thinking or encourage them to draw on what they already know. This is because some teachers are not confident themselves about the subjects they are teaching.
- The teaching of letter sounds (phonics) to help children read and write in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not rigorous enough to help all pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing from their starting points.
- Behaviour for learning requires improvement because some pupils do not always use their learning time well.
- Governors, leaders and managers have not yet been effective in ensuring teaching is consistently good.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough time to improve their work by thinking about the mistakes and misunderstandings shown up by marking.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Since the appointment of the two acting headteachers, pupils' progress and attainment have improved sharply.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, especially in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6.
- Teaching is improving because the acting headteachers, supported by the consultant headteacher and trust representatives, use a range of approaches to help teachers improve their work.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy school and their attendance is now above average.
- Almost all parents and carers who voiced their opinion agree that the academy has got much better recently.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, as well as groups of pupils or individuals working with learning support assistants. They looked in on pupils during lunchtime and in the breakfast club and visited the playground during break times.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work in all year groups and listened to some pupils read.
- They held meetings with staff, representatives of the academy trust, and groups of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. A discussion with the Chair of the Governing Body was held by telephone. Inspectors spoke informally with many pupils during lessons and break times.
- Inspectors looked carefully at safeguarding documents, information about pupils' progress, self-evaluation documents, policies and development plans.
- The views of 18 parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered, alongside those of parents and carers who visited to talk to inspectors and those who spoke informally with inspectors at the beginning of the school day. In addition, inspectors took into account some 50 parents' and carers' responses to the school's own recent questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Richard Potts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nina Dohel	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Dame Janet Primary Academy opened in December 2012 as a member of the Kemnal Academies Trust and The Attwood Foundation. It was formed with the amalgamation of Dame Janet Community Infant and Junior Schools.
- It is a larger than average-sized primary academy with 597 pupils on roll, including the nursery. A higher than average number of pupils enter and leave the academy each year.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This extra money is for children who are looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families.
- As the academy was recently formed, there is not yet information about whether it meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is led and managed by two acting headteachers, supported by a consultant headteacher and an executive director representing the trust. The two acting headteachers joined the academy in September 2013 and took up their present posts in October. The structure of the senior leadership team was finalised in January 2014.
- Over the last 12 months, the academy has seen considerable changes in its teaching staff. Seven of the 22 teachers are either newly qualified or in the early stages of their teaching career.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good by:
  - ensuring that teachers' questions draw on pupils' knowledge and make them think more deeply about their learning
  - raising teachers' expectations of how hard pupils should work and how well they should use their learning time
  - giving pupils more time to correct mistakes and misunderstandings that have been identified through marking
  - ensuring that all teachers apply the academy's behaviour for learning policies more rigorously
  - making sure that all teachers are trained in and confident about teaching their subjects.
- Improve pupils' writing across the academy by:
  - ensuring that those in the Early Years Foundation Stage are helped to understand the importance of reading and writing and encouraged to practise and improve their early skills
  - ensuring that teachers follow the academy's programme for teaching letters and the sounds they make (phonics) more rigorously
  - ensuring that pupils can organise, develop and communicate their ideas by extended writing in subjects other than English.
- Improve governance, leadership and management by ensuring that regular observation of teaching and targeted feedback to staff members lead to consistently better quality learning throughout the academy.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge well below the levels typically expected for their age. Those attending the Nursery make rapid progress, particularly in their social skills. Children in the Reception Year make slower progress, especially in their speaking and listening, so that they join Year 1 with attainment that is below average.
- Pupils' learning requires improvement because the academy's own data show that attainment remains below average, especially in writing.
- Since the last monitoring visit in April 2013, progress in reading, writing and mathematics has been inconsistent but has accelerated sharply over the last four months, particularly in mathematics. While pupils in Years 2 and 3 are making progress in mathematics that is broadly in line with expectations, the rest are making rapid progress and catching up on lost ground.
- Most pupils are now making at least nationally expected levels of progress in reading and writing, although there are inconsistencies between classes and progress in writing remains slower than that in the other subjects.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding achieve at least as well as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics, and in some classes, notably in Years 3 and 6, they outperform them, although they are still not doing as well as similar pupils nationally.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make rapid progress, especially in their reading, because their small-group work, led by skilled, specialist staff, is particularly effective.
- Despite recent improvement, pupils' understanding of phonics remains weak, especially among the younger, lower-attaining pupils. This limits the progress pupils make in their writing because they do not systematically use their phonics skills to help them read and spell difficult words.
- Recent changes to the way writing is taught have resulted in signs of sharp improvement. A careful analysis of what pupils know, understand and can do has led to more challenging work, while pupils are benefiting from a better understanding of how they can improve their own work in order to achieve the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils who join at other times than normal settle quickly. Careful checking on what they already know and can do means that most are given appropriate work and, as a result, they make progress that is broadly similar to that of the others.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not led to enough pupils making the rapid progress needed to bring their achievement up to the national average.
- Sometimes, the tasks that teachers set for pupils are not demanding enough, so pupils are not challenged to think hard and the speed at which they are expected to work is too slow. Where this happens, pupils lose concentration and their learning suffers.
- Teachers frequently question pupils to find out how much they understand and how well they are doing. Where teaching is weaker, too often the questions demand only a simple or one-word answer that does not require pupils to draw on what they know or to challenge their thinking.
- Teachers' marking in exercise books is thorough and regular. It shows pupils what they need to do to improve and provides useful encouragement for further learning. Its impact is diminished, however, because pupils are not always given the time and opportunity to correct their mistakes or to practise their skills, so that similar mistakes and misunderstandings are sometimes repeated in subsequent work.
- Some teachers have yet to develop the skills and confidence to teach all subjects effectively, so that opportunities to deepen pupils' learning are sometimes missed. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, chances to build on children's natural curiosity and interest in writing and picture books were not taken, and in Key Stage 1, the teaching of phonics is not always thorough enough to help all pupils make progress. Across the school, teachers do not

always encourage pupils to write at length in subjects other than English.

- The sharp increase in the speed at which pupils are now learning shows that teaching has improved rapidly in recent months, especially for the more-able pupils. As a result of teachers' high expectations, careful planning to ensure that tasks are challenging, the pace at which pupils are expected to learn and the accurate measuring of their progress, some pupils are now on track to achieve well above average levels.
- Learning support assistants provide valuable support to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who find it difficult to concentrate in class. They make a significant contribution to the caring and positive atmosphere that runs through the academy. Where they are particularly effective, they explain tasks clearly and constantly check that pupils understand what they are doing and how they can improve their work.

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

### **require improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because teachers are not yet consistently successful in getting pupils to respond to their expectations. For example, some teachers do not always insist that pupils stop what they are doing when asked, so that they can listen to their teacher.
- Where teaching requires improvement and the pace of learning is too slow or tasks are too easy or too difficult, pupils' concentration dips and they quickly lose interest in what they are doing. Work in pupils' books shows that they are not always expected to work to the best of their abilities or to take care in how they present their work.
- Where teachers set high standards and insist that they are met, as exemplified in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils respond very well. They listen carefully, work hard and are keen to succeed.
- Throughout the academy, relationships are good, as is the behaviour of pupils in the corridors and playgrounds. The academy has recently introduced an effective system of rewards and sanctions which has resulted in far fewer incidents of bad behaviour and a steep reduction in the number of exclusions. Carefully maintained logs indicate that incidents of repeated poor behaviour and racism are very rare.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils enjoy coming to the academy and say that they feel safe and this is confirmed by the great majority of parents and carers. Most believe that bullying is not a problem and are confident that staff members will deal effectively with any issues. Pupils know about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and what to do to combat them.
- Disabled pupils and those whose special educational needs affect the way they behave are well supported by teaching and support staff and the expectations of them are no different from those of any others.
- Due to robust action, attendance has improved significantly since the last monitoring visit and is now above average.

### **The leadership and management**

### **require improvement**

- The leadership and management of the academy require improvement because the urgent and rigorous changes made by the recently established team have yet to lead to consistently good learning or to a consolidation of improvement in teaching over time. Subject leaders have not yet had sufficient impact on ensuring all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Since their appointment, the acting headteachers, supported by the consultant headteacher and the executive director, have moved quickly and decisively to address a legacy of underperformance. In a period of a few months, they have established systems that enable them to accurately and rigorously check on teaching and learning and the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Until recently, tracking systems designed to help leaders and teachers see how pupils were doing were inaccurate and, because of this, it was not possible to measure the effectiveness of teachers' work. Teachers have now been set performance targets that are closely matched to

the academy's improvement priorities, although it is still too early to see if this has brought about a lasting improvement in the achievement of all pupils.

- Strong and decisive leadership by the acting headteachers and the governing body, supported by the academy trust, has seen the academy through a turbulent period in which there has been significant staff turnover and a restructuring of the senior team that was finalised only in January 2014. Much of the inadequate teaching has been eliminated. A thorough and detailed programme of support and training, based on the regular analysis of how well teachers are doing in their classrooms, is improving the overall quality of teaching, although not enough teaching is yet consistently good.
- Pupils study a wide and varied range of subjects, enriched by trips, visiting speakers and club activities. Pupils get the chance to participate in a good range of sporting, artistic and cultural events that make a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Careful use of extra sports funding has provided more choice for pupils. As a result, more pupils participate in sporting activity, contributing positively to their health and well-being.
- While the academy is committed to equality of opportunity and makes sure that discrimination is not tolerated, pupils do not always have the same high-quality learning because of inconsistencies in teaching between classes.
- Since the monitoring report of April 2013, the academy trust has moved swiftly and decisively to address shortcomings in leadership, teaching and learning and in the achievement of children and pupils. High-quality support over a period of significant change has enabled the academy to establish a new, capable and dedicated senior leadership team. Ambitious performance benchmarks have been put in place and progress towards these improvement goals is carefully checked on a regular basis. The academy has benefited from the broader expertise of key personnel within the trust and from the contributions of the consultant headteacher and the executive director and her team. Plans to recruit to the permanent headteacher positions are in place.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors acknowledge that they did not fully appreciate the scale of the academy's weaknesses on conversion and that the actions taken at the time were not rigorous enough to secure the necessary improvement. This is because they did not have the information they needed to challenge inconsistencies in the quality of teaching or pupils' achievement and had an over-optimistic view of the academy's effectiveness for too long.
- Following receipt of the monitoring report in April 2013, governors have not been afraid to make tough decisions about staffing. They have acted quickly and vigorously to strengthen leadership and improve teaching and, as a result, pupils are beginning to make more progress.
- Governors are very supportive of the academy and committed to a vision of excellence. They know the academy well and visit frequently. They have commissioned expert advice to help them hold leaders and managers to account and have set ambitious performance targets, linking pay closely to pupils' achievement.
- Governors use their individual expertise to check on spending decisions. Pupil premium funding has been carefully spent on additional teaching support and this is enabling eligible pupils to make at least as much and, in some cases more, progress than their classmates. Governors are vigilant in making sure that their spending decisions lead to better pupil achievement.
- Governors make sure that statutory requirements are met, particularly those relating to safeguarding.

## 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>	138972
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	427185

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	597
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tom Attwood
<b>Acting Headteachers</b>	Maria Phillipson and Sam Atkinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01843 593463
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<b>Email address</b>	office@djpa-tkat.org



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