

Jenyns First School and Nursery

Uplands, Braughing, Ware, Hertfordshire SG11 2QJ

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and governors have created a culture where only the best will do for each child and pupil. Their committed work has continued to drive up standards since the previous inspection. Jenyns First School and Nursery is now an outstanding provision.
- Leaders monitor aspects of the school's work meticulously. This ensures that they have a very accurate view of the quality of provision.
- Safeguarding is at the centre of the work of all leaders and staff. Leaders' intrinsic knowledge about pupils in the school, and their effective partnerships with other agencies, contribute to highly effective safeguarding.
- Very effective leadership, combined with high-quality teaching, learning and assessment in the early years, ensures that children make outstanding progress from their starting points within their nurturing and stimulating environment.
- Leaders' and teachers' precise identification of the children's and pupils' individual needs is a strength. It ensures that, in every year group, children and pupils receive support to ensure that they achieve the best that they can.
- Leaders have planned and implemented an exciting curriculum that successfully meets the needs and interests of the pupils. Pupils get an extensive range of valuable 'life' experiences that draw on the local community and include a wider range of visits.
- Outcomes for pupils in all key stages are outstanding. Pupils in all year groups make substantial and sustained progress. This is particularly so for the pupils who start school with skills and abilities below what is typical for their age. All pupils leave Year 4 having made outstanding progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who are disadvantaged, is outstanding. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons, around the school and during breaktimes. They are highly positive, value their education and attend incredibly well.
- Leaders and teachers are continuing to develop their approach to the curriculum so that more pupils can achieve the highest standards over a sustained period of time.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon and develop the curriculum so that more pupils can achieve the very highest standards across all areas of learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, along with governors and other leaders, is steadfast in her determination for all children and pupils to succeed at Jenyns First School and Nursery. The headteacher's clear vision, and that of other leaders, has created a culture of the very highest expectations for what pupils can achieve. Leaders are excellent role models for pupils. They ensure that all pupils receive high-quality learning within a caring, supportive and nurturing environment.
- Senior leaders' and governors' insightful self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurate. It is based on a detailed analysis of pupils' achievement, work in pupils' books, the additional information they know about pupils, and discussions with pupils and parents. Consequently, leaders know what the school does well and what it needs to do to sustain excellence. Their actions have resulted in outstanding provision for all pupils, including the few eligible for pupil premium funding and the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The carefully thought-out curriculum contributes exceptionally well to pupils' outstanding personal development and to the promotion of British values. Pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss and explain their views. Visitors to school give pupils opportunities to make meaningful links between the curriculum and their own lives. Pupils greatly enjoy an exciting curriculum that stimulates their imaginations and broadens their perspectives, providing memorable experiences that engage and enthuse them. For example, older pupils talked very enthusiastically and concisely about their Reception class memories of 'welly Wednesday'. They recalled their learning in detail and said 'the fun in our learning just carries on'. Consequently, children and pupils grow in confidence and, from a very early age, develop in maturity and assume inquisitive, enquiring minds.
- Leaders use meticulous and routine monitoring to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently of the highest quality. The whole leadership team shares this commitment to make sure that all pupils excel in well-planned lessons. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding across the entire school.
- There is a meticulous appraisal system to measure staff performance. Ambitious targets, linked to pupils' achievement and school improvement, are reviewed regularly using a wide range of evidence. These reviews ensure that leaders successfully hold staff rigorously to account for pupils' progress.
- All staff are passionate about the school and are fully committed to leaders' aims and vision. Staff morale is high. They all value the opportunities to develop their teaching skills further through the numerous training opportunities they receive. The skills and expertise of leaders are used very effectively to support the development of all staff. Governors and leaders value the school team and ensure that staff development and their personal aspirations are included in discussions about performance management.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very strong progress from their individual starting points. Additional funding is spent effectively on resources that make the most difference to pupils' outcomes.

Purposeful links with external services, where necessary, are having a beneficial effect on these pupils' development. Support staff lead competently on adapting the learning for pupils who have specific difficulties. As a result, the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are met very successfully.

- The school's number of disadvantaged pupils is too small to report upon without identifying individual pupils. However, governors and leaders ensure that the additional funding they receive is spent well to provide precisely considered individualised support to meet pupils' specific academic and personal, social and emotional needs.
- The effective use of the sports funding provides pupils with additional opportunities, so that they can participate in a varied range of activities, both in school time and out of school hours. For example, termly sporting workshops focus on aspects such as dance and 'fit kids'. These are serving to increase pupils' confidence as well as increase their awareness of how to keep fit and lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The local authority has provided very effective challenge and support to senior leaders, reinforcing their high expectations of children's achievement. This has successfully facilitated further improvements to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Parents think extremely highly of the school staff and the work they do to help their children achieve well. All parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey said that they would recommend the school to others. A common point made by parents is summarised in the view: 'I think this is an exceptional school. The children are nurtured as individuals and importance is placed on their development as rounded human beings. There is an emphasis on care for other members of the school and a warm atmosphere prevails. I cannot speak highly enough of Jenyns and its teachers and other carers.' Another parent stated that the school was, 'One team giving the children roots to grow and wings to fly.'

Governance of the school

- There is strong leadership from the chair and vice-chair of governors who, with the rest of the highly skilled group, have set high expectations for their work. Governors secure appropriate training to improve their skills. Their roles and responsibilities are clear. As a result, the governors work highly effectively together in improving the school.
- Governors provide appropriate challenge and support to the headteacher and her leadership team. They know and understand the school and make good use of this knowledge to ask precise and pertinent questions. For example, governors asked about how baseline assessments were carried out. This ensured that they were confident in the accuracy of leaders' views of the school's assessment information on the progress pupils make. This type of probing questioning is characteristic of the challenge routinely posed by governors. Consequently, leaders are held fully to account.
- A close eye is kept on the impact of the additional funding that leaders receive for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and the sports funding. This means that governors know, and can challenge knowledgeably, about how the funds are being used to improve the outcomes for pupils, both academically and for their personal, social and emotional development.
- The governing body is well aware of its statutory duties relating to keeping pupils safe,

and monitors safeguarding policies and practice closely. The safeguarding governor meets regularly with leaders to check that arrangements are suitable and effective. Additionally, he meets with staff and pupils, and their views contribute to his evaluations of how well the school keeps pupils safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They have created a whole-school culture of vigilance and care for children and families. They review and evaluate the impact of their work to ensure that it is rigorous and meets current requirements. Staff benefit from regular training in relation to a range of aspects of safeguarding, including radicalisation and extremism. All staff demonstrate that they know what to do to keep children safe. They act accordingly in a timely and thorough way, carefully following the school's agreed procedures.
- Staff at all levels build positive and effective relationships with families. These close relationships help parents to feel comfortable to seek help when they need it. The school also works well with a range of other professionals, to provide effective help to families as required.
- Records are detailed, fit for purpose and show that staff take appropriate action to safeguard pupils. Recruitment checks on staff are suitable and thorough. In all aspects of the school's work, children's and pupils' safety and well-being rightly take priority.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching at Jenyns is characterised by high-quality, positive relationships between adults and pupils. Staff make the very best use of time and their expertise to quicken pupils' learning, so that all pupils' needs are met and they therefore achieve very well. Consequently, teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Diligent teachers and support staff share the high aspirations of the leaders. All adults understand that they are accountable for how well pupils achieve and welcome the guidance they receive to improve their practice. All teachers are reflective about the difference they make to pupils' achievement. As a result, pupils benefit from consistently excellent teaching.
- Leaders have developed a very secure assessment system, which staff understand and all use in their day-to-day teaching. Teachers use the assessment information very effectively to plan teaching that consistently meets pupils' needs and takes into account their varying starting points. This results in pupils making outstanding progress.
- Teachers set very high standards. They know pupils well and carry out precise assessment activities that clearly identify pupils' next steps. Teachers use this information carefully in their planning of teaching and learning so it is individualised to meet pupils' specific needs. They ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve what they are capable of by providing effective support, including for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few disadvantaged pupils.

Additionally, the small number of lower-attaining pupils receive high-quality additional support. This enables them to catch up with their peers rapidly.

- Well-trained teaching assistants provide exceptional levels of support for all pupils. They are used effectively to provide additional interventions for pupils when gaps in learning are identified, and to support teachers in leading individual and small-group teaching activities.
- High-quality questioning enables teachers to build on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers have an excellent knowledge of all the subjects they teach, and are able to identify quickly any misconceptions and correct them effectively. Teachers are adept at accurately identifying pupils' starting points and providing appropriate support, guidance and skilful intervention to help pupils produce outstanding work across the curriculum.
- Staff challenge and encourage children to think through more complex tasks and problems. Pupils explain their thought processes as a matter of routine, and understand its importance, as doing this shows the depth of their understanding. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were tasked with writing a mathematical statement about length and proving it. One statement was: your foot is one sixth of the height of your leg. Pupils all responded with similarly complex problems and then followed up with in-depth explanations to prove them. In achieving this, pupils worked at a high level, applying their knowledge of fractions, estimation and measure in various contexts.
- Pupils really enjoy learning and are developing maturely into resilient, life-long learners. When asked what they did best at school, they enthused about their work and demonstrated a deep understanding of the purpose of their activities and work. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils talked about taking on the role of being a 'mini TA'. Pupils explained that this: 'is helping others in your class but it is more than that. When we help someone we are actually improving ourselves because we are reminding ourselves what we know and need to think hard about how we explain it to others.'
- Reading is taught very well from the time pupils start at the school in Nursery. Teachers promote a love of reading. In the Nursery and Reception class children talked excitedly about reading 'Mr Gumpy's Outing' and were very keen to show off the boat they had constructed so they could act out the story. Pupils independently use a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. The impact of the highly effective phonics teaching was evident when listening to pupils reading. Pupils quickly develop fluency as they move up the school and have access to good-quality texts that they analyse closely, extending their inference skills. As a result, progress in reading across the school is rapid and improving.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is excellent. This is as a result of teachers taking advantage of every opportunity for pupils to apply their writing skills across different subjects. Pupils are very clear about the purpose of their writing and the audience for whom they write. They apply their punctuation, grammar and spelling skills accurately, and teachers ensure that this is the case every time pupils write. Additionally, pupils enjoy writing. This is because teachers provide a creative stimulus that interests pupils, alongside having high expectations of pupils applying their skills well. For example, a group of boys reported 'loving' writing about the 'fake robbery' teachers had set up. Pupils had to take on detective roles and report upon the crime. The boys said:

'Teachers make it fun, but at the same time, we also know we need to think about using punctuation and exciting words because we communicate through our writing.'

- In mathematics, teachers encourage pupils to develop the depth of their understanding of mathematical concepts and assess levels of pupils' understanding accurately. Work seen shows that teachers set appropriate work to meet the needs of all pupils consistently. For example, inspection evidence shows that the most able pupils respond successfully to 'challenge' and 'extension' questions for additional opportunities to develop their reasoning skills. This is a dominant feature of all pupils' work, demonstrating that pupils make exceptional progress.
- Teachers constantly seek out innovative and creative ways to teach the inspiring curriculum. They understand all subjects very well across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers use this knowledge to plan high-quality lessons, which contribute to pupils' outstanding progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very confident and self-assured learners. They actively participate in their lessons, clearly showing huge enjoyment. Pupils speak very positively about their experiences in school. They speak confidently about the wide range of 'fun' and 'exciting' activities and additional opportunities they receive. Extremely positive relationships between adults and pupils are nurtured throughout the school, resulting in pupils being fully involved in their learning.
- Adults encourage pupils to be aspirational about their future lives. Consequently, pupils have a very clear idea about what skills they need to master in order to achieve what they want to. For example, when talking to a group of pupils, all were able to say what their career paths might look like. One pupil said: 'I want to be an author. I am helped to be able to do this because I practise my writing and have good advice about how to keep improving it.' Another said: 'I want to be a scientist. I really enjoy finding out about things and am good at finding out answers when I explore. We do that here in our "discovery den".'
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities within school. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their roles as 'energy and sports champions', being elected to be on the school council and being librarians.
- All children's and pupils' confidence and self-esteem blossom from the moment they start their education at Jenyns. All adults are very aware that this means that their academic achievement will follow suit. Pupils' achievements are given a high profile and are well celebrated in, for example, the achievement assemblies and are recorded in the 'Golden book'. Pupils take great pride in this and, equally, enjoy seeing their peers do something well. This was observed during the inspection when there was an assembly discussing 'friendship' and pupils listened to each other and responded positively to their peers.
- The transition of children and pupils from each of the key stages and from Year 4 into

their next school is excellent. This is because time and careful consideration of each individual's needs is taken as they move from early years into Year 1; key stage 1 into key stage 2 and from lower school on completion of Year 4. This ensures that children and pupils continue to excel throughout, and are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

- British values are promoted well as an integral aspect of the school's curriculum. Pupils know about the democratic process in Britain and can talk knowledgeably about the recent general election. They show an awareness of how the rule of law applies to them. Pupils accept differences as a matter of course and show high levels of respect for themselves and one another.
- From a very young age, pupils demonstrate and continue to develop very mature attitudes. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and understand that actions have consequences. Pupils say that they are aware of what bullying is but they do not see or experience it at Jenyns. They are all confident that if there is any problem they have many caring adults at the school they would go to. They mentioned the 'worry boxes' that they use if they have anything on their mind they want to share.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online, as a result of the carefully thought-out curriculum. Pupils show that they understand the potential dangers of talking to other people when online. They told the inspector that if they saw something that made them uncomfortable, they would immediately tell an adult. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school and are very well cared for.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Upon entry to the school, it is a calm and harmonious place to be. From the very start of the school day, children and pupils enter school ready and eager to learn. This is the case across the whole school. This is a result of all staff setting very high expectations for pupils' behaviour so that their conduct is exemplary. If needed, staff remind children of what is expected of them and use praise extremely well to reinforce excellent behaviour.
- Pupils move around the school quietly and sensibly. They are extremely polite and courteous to everyone they meet and take great pride and care in their environment. Pupils talked about how appreciative they are, and how lucky they feel because their teachers work hard to make sure 'that we get the best' in the classrooms and the outside. One pupil excitedly said: 'Look at everything we have, everyone here knows how lucky we are.'
- Leaders rigorously scrutinise attendance to ensure that all children and pupils attend well. Appropriate measures are in place so that if families require support it is swiftly provided. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance is consistently better than the national average over time, including for all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make substantial progress in key stage 1 to build on the skills developed in the early years. Consequently, the results of national assessments at the end of key stage 1 are higher than the national average for different groups of pupils. Current work in

books shows that most pupils are working at least at the standard expected for their age, with a significant proportion working at higher standards across the curriculum.

- Phonics is taught extremely well and, as a result, pupils make excellent progress. Almost all pupils in Year 1 meet the required standard in the phonics screening check. Teachers' and teaching assistants' first-rate subject knowledge ensures that all pupils achieve highly by developing and applying their phonics skills to their writing and reading. Teaching assistants reinforce the consistent approach to phonics. No pupil is left behind, and if they are at risk of doing so they are swiftly identified and additional, effective support is provided.
- The most able pupils achieve well in their time at the school, across year groups and key stages. This is because teachers plan challenging work that builds on their prior knowledge and learning exceptionally well. Leaders and teachers are continuing to build upon their curriculum to ensure that more pupils can achieve the highest standards.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of the excellent teaching and support they receive. As a result, they make strong progress from their starting points academically, and also in their personal, social and emotional development. Teachers make sure that all pupils' contributions are valued equally in school activities.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make very good progress from their starting points. This is as a result of individualised support being carefully planned and skilfully implemented. Additional to the success of the provision for disadvantaged pupils is that it is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is making a difference to the progress the pupils make academically, and in their personal and social development.
- Pupils enjoy reading and read confidently. Progress is outstanding from the pupils' various starting points. Their comprehension skills are developing, including their ability to infer meaning. Pupils use their phonics knowledge extremely well to read unfamiliar words. Most-able pupils spoke enthusiastically about their reading and demonstrated how they competently use a variety of strategies to develop their understanding of what they are reading. Inspection evidence shows that pupils have a growing range of strategies to work out how to read increasingly complex words as they go through school from early years to Year 4.
- Consistently strong progress is made by all pupils in writing. Teachers structure the teaching of writing to ensure that pupils can use their growing knowledge effectively in their writing. Pupils write at length across a wide range of subjects, and teachers help pupils to correct mistakes in their writing, no matter which subject is being taught. Consequently, pupils make substantial progress in writing from their different starting points and the current school information shows that a greater proportion than previously are on track to reach the higher standards.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in a wide range of subjects. The quality of work they produce in subjects such as history, art, geography and science is of a high quality. Topic books show that pupils successfully transfer their basic skills in all other subjects. Pupils are able to explain how they do this well. For example, when asked to show the inspector some work that shows how they use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects, pupils ably shared their science work, where they have used

data collection to create a bar chart, and their topic books, where they have written a recount in history about their whole-school 'Celtic Harmony' visit.

- In 2016, the proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development was just below the national average. Evidence shows that a few children in that year group entered Reception with a much lower starting point. Although they made excellent progress, they did not all reach the good level of development by the end of the academic year. However, scrutiny of these children's progress and attainment, now in Year 1, shows that they have caught up rapidly and are now attaining in line with their peers. This represents outstanding progress from their starting points upon entry to Jenyns First School and Nursery.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children in the early years provision make outstanding progress, whatever their starting points, because teachers accurately assess their skills and their next steps well. Additionally, the adults promote and encourage a culture of exploration and investigation. The children are clearly enthused and show great enjoyment about being able to do this. The early years setting exudes a 'buzz' of continual excitement. This is a major factor contributing towards all pupils at Jenyns developing and achieving so well as this culture spreads through the whole school.
- Over time, children have benefited from excellent early years provision. The Nursery is an exceptional foundation for all children to develop early basic skills. They develop independence quickly because routines are established effectively. This contributes to a calm and settled start to the day for the children. Although many children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge which are typical for their age, more recent cohorts of children have entered the school below what is typical for their age. However, all children make strong progress over the year and are exceptionally well prepared for their time in Reception.
- Children start the Reception Year with skills and abilities which are broadly typical for their age. Due to the outstanding teaching they receive, children leave Reception class making excellent progress from their starting points and therefore catching up with their peers. Pupils receive exceptional individualised support and, as a result, they are prepared exceptionally well academically, socially and emotionally for Year 1.
- The environment is bright and vibrant and very well resourced. This promotes children's independence and enjoyment. There is a real purpose to children's learning. Teachers provide innovative and exciting resources to underpin all learning areas.
- Staff have an exceedingly good knowledge of each child and use this to plan purposeful and imaginative activities. Staff nurture, motivate and engage all children so that everyone has the opportunity to succeed, whatever their ability or need. Where appropriate, and following leaders' monitoring of children's progress, targeted support quickly enables those identified as underachieving to catch up, and the most able to be challenged to extend their own learning.
- Relationships with parents are extremely strong and effective. The shared information and regular contact with parents ensure that they contribute to the children's excellent progress. For example, parents share 'wow' moments with staff that reflect children's achievements at home. This is added to the school assessment information and,

consequently, a whole picture of each child evolves. Parents recognise the exceptional work that the staff do in preparing their children well for the transition to key stage 1. One parent said: 'I couldn't be happier with the Nursery and Reception class at Jenyns. It's fantastic. The Nursery and Reception setting is the start of primary education you dream about having for your child.'

School details

Unique reference number	117087
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10023522

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	Three to nine
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Knott
Headteacher	Sandra Morris
Telephone number	01920 821461
Website	www.jenyns.herts.sch.uk
Email address	admin@jenyns.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 May 2013

Information about this school

- Jenyns First School and Nursery is a smaller than average school where the large majority of pupils are White British.
- There are very few pupils from minority ethnic or mixed heritage backgrounds.
- There have been changes to the leadership at the school since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post in September 2014.
- The early years has one class of combined Nursery and Reception children.
- There are three classes containing pupils from more than one year group.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than that found nationally.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all three classrooms on both inspection days alongside the headteacher.
- The inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and the local authority representative.
- Meetings were held with pupils from across the school to discuss their learning and views on the school.
- The senior teacher (who is also the mathematics leader), the special needs coordinator and the school business manager met with the inspector to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- The inspector heard pupils reading during a guided reading lesson, met groups of pupils and also informally talked to pupils in lessons and as they were out on their lunch break.
- A wide range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching, were scrutinised. The inspector also examined school records relating to safeguarding and behaviour.
- The inspector scrutinised a full range of pupils' books across a range of subjects and looked at how pupils applied their skills across all curriculum subject areas.
- The 37 free-text messages and 41 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection, were taken into account. In addition to this, the inspector also considered the seven responses to the staff survey as well as informal discussions with staff.

Inspection team

Tracy Fielding, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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