



Quilters Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114801
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279451
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Andrew Watters LI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Laindon Road
School category	Community		CM12 9LD
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277652339
Number on roll	259	Fax number	01277631792
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Nick Walter
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. June Dodd

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a mainly residential area of Billericay and most pupils live in privately owned homes. Its social and economic context is generally very favourable. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low and the percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is just below the national figure. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin and when they enter the school their attainment levels are at least in line with and sometimes above what is expected for seven year olds.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory. Inspectors agree with this and also confirm that some of the school's work is good, for example the quality of care and support for all pupils and the very positive contribution made by the curriculum enrichment activities. Similarly while the value for money provided by the school is satisfactory overall it is excellent in relation to the pupils' personal development and well-being, which are outstanding. Pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some pupils making excellent progress as the result of very effective teaching in Years 5 and 6. While standards are generally good and often above what is expected for the pupils' ages, the school knows that its overall effectiveness is currently impeded by the slower progress made by pupils in the lower school, particularly in writing. This is directly related to some relative weaknesses in teaching and learning, leading to a need to step up the level of checking lessons more frequently and eliminating the weaknesses more effectively. Under the good leadership provided by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who are well supported by the senior leadership team, the school has continued to improve since its last inspection in 2000. This is best shown by the significant improvements in information and communication technology (ICT), the good results in national tests and more recently by the rigorous analysis of assessment information to identify underachievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good understanding of what the school needs to do in order to become consistently effective and high performing. They have the vision to achieve this goal and are determined to ensure that it happens. Because of this the school clearly demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning and eliminate persistent weaknesses. Increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons, making sure that there is more direct teaching of key skills to raise achievement, especially in writing. - Eliminate underachievement in the lower school. Ensure that the pupils' work is sufficiently challenging and builds carefully on what they already know, understand and can do. - Implement a more rigorous approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Make sure that the outcomes of lesson observations are followed up quickly and that areas for development are translated into targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards overall are in line with and frequently above the national average. The pupils do very well in reading and speaking and listening, with standards rising steadily in mathematics and science. Standards in writing are stronger in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4, where there are too many weaknesses in spelling, handwriting, sentence structure and grammar. Pupils' targets are generally challenging and realistic and their

progress towards achieving them is satisfactory overall. Nevertheless, there are significant inconsistencies between year groups. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' achievements are generally good and some pupils make excellent progress. In the lower school the rate of the pupils' progress is slower and too many pupils underachieve. Standards in the national tests have been consistently good and above the national average. The most recent national test results in 2005 indicated that the value added by the school was poor but this is not fully supported by inspection evidence and the school's own assessment information. The headteacher and senior staff are working closely with the local infant school to establish a more secure baseline of academic attainment when the pupils enter the school in Year 3. This is a very positive initiative.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school's motto 'Care, Learn, Respect' is successfully translated into very positive outcomes in its pupils. The vast majority of parents who responded to inspection questionnaires said that their children thoroughly enjoy school. Conversations with pupils confirm this. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and to their learning. These are reflected in their above average levels of attendance. By Year 6, the pupils are mature and thoughtful young people, a credit to themselves and their families and fine ambassadors for the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is good in lessons. It is often exemplary in the playground and in large gatherings such as assemblies. Pupils show high levels of confidence and respect for others. They work very well in groups and are proud to be part of a house team. Their good understanding of citizenship is evident in school and class council meetings. They show a good awareness of global issues such as poverty and the environment. They set very good examples in recycling, conservation and charity fund-raising. Pupils show great respect for the safety and welfare of themselves and others and the recorded incidence of bullying and racism is very low. Their concern for safety is typified by their efforts to stop dangerous car parking outside the school. They are adopting healthy lifestyles extremely well, for instance, in physical activities during 'enrichment afternoons' and after-school clubs. By the end of Year 6, their above average standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT, combined with very good social skills, provide a secure basis for the next stage of education and the future world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning reflected in pupils' work and in lessons ranges from good to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Some of the teaching in the upper school is of a particularly high standard. In the best lessons teachers make sure that the pupils know exactly what they need to learn in order to raise their achievement levels. No time is wasted and the pupils respond well to tasks that are challenging and

enjoyable. Assessment is used effectively to pinpoint important areas for improvement and teachers' questions probe the pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking. In the relatively weaker lessons there is too little direct teaching of key skills, important concepts and strategies for learning are not explained sufficiently, the pupils' tasks are not matched well enough to their different learning needs and they are not given enough guidance about how to improve their work. These weaknesses are contributing directly to the levels of underachievement and slower progress made by some pupils, particularly in the lower school. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to raising standards although on a few occasions they are not deployed effectively to make best use of their time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It generally offers a range of good opportunities for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those with particular gifts or talents. The ICT curriculum, identified by the inspection in 2000 as an area for improvement, is now good. Some recent initiatives, such as improving links between subjects, have yet to make a full impact on pupils' achievement. A very effective programme of personal, social and health education promotes pupils' development extremely well. The school's efforts have been recognised in the 'Healthy Schools' and 'Activemark' awards. Pupils greatly enjoy, and parents appreciate, the excellent range of extra activities offered. These include a very wide range of clubs and regular residential visits. The weekly enrichment afternoons give pupils access to specialist sports coaching and activities such as thinking skills and drama which enhance the quality of their learning and contribute positively to their achievements.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares well for its pupils. Its guidance and support for their personal development is strong. As a result, pupils feel very well cared for and say they have adults to turn to should they have any problems. Their good work and behaviour are recognised and celebrated, for example in assemblies. The ways that academic progress is guided and supported are satisfactory and are improving with the introduction of more rigorous systems to track individual achievements. Procedures for child protection, including the vetting of the adults who work in school, are secure. Risk assessments are carried out thoroughly. There is good support for pupils who have special educational needs and for other pupils who may be vulnerable, including effective links with parents and relevant outside agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides good leadership. She cares passionately about the personal well-being of all pupils and staff, successfully creating a strong team ethic and common

sense of purpose. Pupils are confident and well rounded young people and adults are good humoured and committed to further improvement. The headteacher receives good support from the deputy headteacher who is making a particularly effective contribution to staff development, training and the analysis of pupils' achievements. The senior leadership team speak confidently about their role in school improvement and make a positive contribution to the school's collective leadership, which demonstrates a good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is secure and generally effective. The school has accurately identified most of its pressing priorities, ensuring that pupils, parents and governors have a say in what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. Governors are very active in the life of the school and keep a watchful eye on how well the pupils are doing, asking pertinent questions to ensure they are kept accurately informed. The arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory but not yet sufficiently rigorous. The senior leadership team and some curriculum leaders carefully monitor provision in their subjects, the headteacher carries out the performance management of all teachers systematically and the deputy headteacher is a very good induction tutor for newly qualified teachers. Nevertheless some important weaknesses in teaching persist and the current level of monitoring lessons is not having a strong enough impact to eliminate these weaknesses which are impeding the pupils' progress, particularly in the lower school.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We have really enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons. You are all very friendly, cheerful and polite and have made sure that for the two days we have been with you we have felt a part of your school. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We could see that you try hard to do your best and help each other. Well done! We think your school council does a very good job and works hard to improve things for you, like getting you more games equipment to use at playtimes. We are very pleased to tell you that you go to a school which does really well in making sure you are happy, safe and confident. In fact many of you told us that the school is great and that you appreciate all the exciting things you have a chance to do. We had a good time talking to your teachers and it was good to see how well they and you got on together. Many of you really know what you are expected to learn and how you can achieve even more. Your teachers, the headteacher and all the other adults in school work hard to make sure that you enjoy your work and all the interesting things that you have a chance to do, like the activity afternoons. We have asked Mrs Dodd and the senior teachers to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school, to make sure that those of you in the lower school are given every opportunity to achieve well, that your lessons are always challenging and interesting and that there are regular checks to see that this is happening. We shall take away lots of good memories about your school and have really enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.