

# John Ray Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115028
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX
<b>Inspection number</b>	290106
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Marshall

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 on roll</b>	
School	344
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bill Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Verity Boreham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2002
<b>School address</b>	Notley Road Braintree Essex CM7 1HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01376324107
<b>Fax number</b>	01376324107

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	290106

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school, sharing a campus with an infant and a secondary school. Attainment on entry is in line with the national average. A lower than average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are from a White British background. A very small number of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. Over the last twelve months, the school has worked closely with the local authority in order to raise the school's overall effectiveness and pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. The headteacher has been in post since January 2007.

## 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's effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. The leaders of the school and its staff are committed to promoting pupils' personal development. The strong focus on pupils' moral and social awareness results in good personal development and well-being. Pupils praise the school's friendly atmosphere where everyone 'looks out for each other.' This, alongside positive relationships with staff, means pupils enjoy coming to school, develop positive attitudes towards learning and behave well. Pupils' attendance is good. They are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of education. Their contribution to the community is sound. Their involvement in the school community, including the school council, is good. Whilst they enjoy taking responsibility and are proud to have an impact on school life, for example through the play leader scheme, their contribution to the wider local community is less well developed. A high proportion of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive about the school. An effective partnership is in place between the school and others to develop pupils' well-being.

Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school and pupils reach average standards by the time they leave at eleven years of age. This is because teaching overall is satisfactory. The school has tackled some previous weaknesses in teaching, although inconsistencies remain and pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but not all make sufficient use of this information to plan lessons that challenge pupils and secure good progress. This inconsistent use of assessment information means that care, guidance and support are only satisfactory overall which contributes to achievement being no better than satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets pupils' needs. The school has been successful in securing improvements in the provision for English and mathematics, particularly over the last twelve months, demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve. Whilst continuing to target these areas, the school has identified the need to secure similar improvements in science. Assessment information is not used well enough in science to plan lessons that challenge pupils sufficiently to achieve well, or to enable them to develop the enquiry skills needed to improve their understanding.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's use of self-evaluation is sound. The new headteacher and leadership team have introduced regular checks to help them understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and know where to focus efforts for improvement. Consequently, they have been successful in bringing about improvements such as in pupils' behaviour and are beginning to raise achievement in English and mathematics. However, these checks are not yet sufficiently rigorous nor have they had enough time to raise standards, secure consistent teaching and ensure pupils achieve well in all their learning. Governance is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils achieve well by improving the quality and consistency of teaching so that it is always good or better.
- Improve progress, particularly in science, by making better use of assessment to check how well pupils are doing, providing sufficient challenge in lessons and helping pupils know how to improve their learning.
- Raise standards by ensuring all leaders are effective in checking how well the school is doing and taking action to bring about improvements.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The overall achievement of pupils is satisfactory. This includes those with learning difficulties and disabilities, the most able and those at the early stages of learning English. From broadly average starting points, pupils across Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards reached in national tests in 2006 by pupils in Year 6 were satisfactory overall.

In recent years, standards reached in national tests at Year 6 have been below average, reflecting weaknesses in provision. Much of the progress many pupils have made has been over the past year as the school, supported well by the Local Authority, has focused more closely on checking and improving progress. Although achievement in science is satisfactory, it is less strong than in English and mathematics. This is because of shortcomings the school has identified in how it is developing pupils' investigative skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This is reflected in their enjoyment of school, positive attitudes, regular attendance and good behaviour. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions and work well together. They stress this is a key factor in why they enjoy the school. Consequently, they get along well and help one another, as is demonstrated by their readiness to welcome new pupils to the school. They have a good understanding of the importance of staying safe. As a result they behave in a considerate and responsible manner towards each other and have received the Diana Award in recognition of this. Pupils are increasingly becoming aware of the need to have a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They develop a reasonable understanding of the customs and cultures of others. Their spiritual development is satisfactory and developing with an increasing school focus, for example through the much debated 'Thought for the Week'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Over the last 12 months considerable changes have taken place and these have had a positive effect on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Examples of good teaching and learning are now regularly shared with other staff and are beginning to help to raise the quality of provision overall. Nonetheless, the school is aware that some things need time to settle and become routine. Teachers are increasingly using assessment information to set high expectations and plan challenging work though this is not yet found in all lessons. Consequently, work is not always adapted closely enough to pupils' capabilities to enable them to achieve well. As a result, in some lessons, pupils are not challenged enough to make even greater progress in their learning. Learning is fostered by the good relationships between pupils and adults with behaviour managed well. While all work is marked,

teachers' marking is inconsistent and comments do not always make clear to pupils how they can improve their work. Teaching assistants contribute satisfactorily to learning, particularly when supporting those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The satisfactory curriculum is sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. The school's focus on providing effective personal, social and health education has been a key factor in securing pupils' good personal development and well being. The curriculum is enriched by a reasonable range of activities outside the school day and visitors and visits also help to make learning more relevant and exciting. Pupils learn German and benefit from specialist support in subjects such as physical education and design and technology. Suitable attention is paid to developing the pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills because the school has been developing these areas as a priority. Consequently, pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the skills needed for the next stage of schooling and the world of work. In science, where the curriculum has yet to receive the same focus, pupils' investigative skills are not always developed systematically. This is because assessment has yet to be used effectively enough to adapt and tailor the curriculum to support better than expected progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils and their parents appreciate that this is a caring school where ensuring pupils' well-being is important. Health and safety procedures are understood by pupils and staff. Pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to if necessary. Support for different groups of pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities or those at the early stages of learning English, is satisfactory as a result of sound links with outside agencies. This enables them to achieve as well as other pupils. Academic guidance and support is satisfactory. Procedures to track pupils' progress and set targets have been introduced in English and mathematics, but are not used equally effectively by all staff. Assessment information is not always used well enough in science to inform teachers' planning, set high expectations or help pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher has quickly established a culture of teamwork and effectively driven forward recent improvements. Alongside her assistant headteachers, she analyses data and has introduced monitoring of teaching to see where it is best and what needs to be improved. This process is being refined to make better use of assessment to check and evaluate the quality of education and how well pupils are doing. However, at present it is not rigorous enough to ensure that teaching is consistently good and that standards are rising significantly. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's overall effectiveness and the school provides satisfactory value for money. Governance is satisfactory, although governors are not involved sufficiently in checking the school's performance. The school takes into account the views of parents and a very large majority responded positively when asked about the effectiveness of their school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

---

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of John Ray Junior School, Braintree, CM7 1HL

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We are pleased to hear that you like school and that the adults are kind and help you to enjoy your learning. We think that they help you to know just what you have to do to keep safe and are helping you to know more about how to keep healthy. We were happy to hear that you think that you all get on well with each other and are getting good at sorting out any problems you have, for example through training to be play leaders or being part of the school council. We think you are good at welcoming new friends to your school, are polite to adults and behave well.

John Ray Juniors is a satisfactory school. In order to make your learning even better, we have asked the adults at your school to:

- make sure lessons always challenge you to do your very best
- always help you to know what you need to do to improve your work
- keep checking exactly what the school does best and what could be better so that you all learn as well as you possibly can.

You can help too by always trying your best. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours faithfully

Mrs J Marshall

Lead Inspector