



The Buttsbury Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115278
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290187
Inspection dates 2–3 October 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Cosway

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Norsey View Drive
School category	Foundation		Billericay
Age range of pupils	7–11		Essex CM12 0QR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277 623217
Number on roll (school)	492	Fax number	01277 631141
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Heather Stuart
		Headteacher	Mr Vaughan Collier
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
7–11	2–3 October 2006	290187

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Buttsbury Junior School is a larger than average primary school in Billericay. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Few pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. Most pupils start at school with levels of knowledge and understanding that are slightly above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly below average. The percentage of pupils who are eligible to free school meals is also below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Buttsbury Junior School succeeds because it is a place where pupils feel secure and happy, whilst challenged and helped to do their best. It is a good school with many outstanding features, especially in its care and support for pupils, and it gives a good quality of education. Almost all pupils achieve well. They begin at this school with levels of attainment slightly above the national average in English, mathematics and science. They leave Year 6 with results in the national tests that are securely above average, especially in English and science. The higher attaining pupils do especially well and their progress is outstanding. This is partly because of the school's high expectations of them. They are set challenging tasks and motivated well by good, sometimes outstanding, teaching. Pupils work hard and quickly. The school met or exceeded its high targets for pupils reaching level 5 in 2006 in English, mathematics and science. The less able pupils did not achieve satisfactorily in mathematics. Some of them failed to reach the expected level, although all pupils achieved well in English and science. Parents and other agencies have a good partnership with the school and this helps pupils to succeed. There are after-school sessions for parents to help them to understand the new ways of teaching numeracy and literacy. This helps them to support their children in their learning at home. One parent said, 'The teaching staff and assistants are sincere and caring, with all the pupils' best interests at heart.' A real strength of the school is pupils' personal development. It is outstanding. This is a large school, but every pupil is known by name and cared for. There is a strong family atmosphere and a sense of inclusion that recognises each child's strengths and needs. There is good support for pupils with special talents or learning needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teaching is good and the lessons are interesting and well-planned. As a result, pupils enjoy being at the school and have positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well because teachers control and manage them well. Pupils are encouraged effectively to lead safe and healthy lives. They learn about healthy eating, have good opportunities for physical exercise and are made aware of dangers, such as drug abuse. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. The school council gives the pupils very good opportunities to make changes in the school. They make excellent progress in their appreciation of the wider community, learning about the diversity of faiths and cultures in the world. The good progress they make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) helps to ensure their future economic well-being, as does their work raising money for a variety of charities. There is an outstanding curriculum, complemented by a very comprehensive programme of after-school clubs and educational visits. Good leadership and management have brought about effective progress since the last inspection and there is a clear focus on raising attainment. The school has good capacity for continued improvement and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics so that more of the less able pupils attain their expected levels by Year 6.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils start at the school their levels of knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy are slightly above average. Tests and inspection evidence show that standards are securely above average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Almost all pupils achieve well during their time in the school. In the national tests for 2005, results were above average in English, mathematics and science. However, very few pupils reached level 5 in the writing tests because many of the more able pupils underachieved in English. The teaching of writing was a focus in the following year and the results of the 2006 tests were significantly better. Targets were exceeded for more able pupils with a much greater proportion attaining higher levels. Their achievement was outstanding in all three subjects. Small groups of less able pupils failed to meet their target grades in mathematics in 2005. There was also underachievement at this level in 2006. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, the gifted and talented and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress because of the support given to them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Children really enjoy coming to school and achieve well. Attendance is above average. Staff present very good role models and treat children with great respect. Consequently, children behave very well; they are confident, polite and considerate. Pupils are keen to face new challenges, work hard and demonstrate mature attitudes. They have good opportunities to be involved in decision making and their views are taken seriously and acted upon. They contribute well to the community, raising sums of money for charities locally and further afield. They have a good understanding of the importance of a balanced diet and exercise to stay healthy. They have good basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and are increasingly confident in using computers. This makes a strong contribution to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the school are good. Teachers plan lessons well with specific objectives for pupils. Overall, lessons move at a good pace and time is used well. Pupils are challenged with appropriate work and build on what they have already learned. Teaching assistants support pupils and small groups well. In the outstanding lessons, the teachers' focused questioning leads pupils to evaluate their own work. Teachers' high expectations and the pace in these lessons mean that pupils make large strides

in their learning, concentrating and collaborating well. In the satisfactory lessons, the pace of activities is slower, resulting in less challenge to pupils. Teachers manage pupils very well so that behaviour is outstanding and they are eager to learn, answer questions and share their ideas. One Year 6 pupil said, 'It's wonderful, it's the way they teach us. We are involved in activities, it's fun and exciting'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The school has focused on the need to raise standards in writing and this has been successful. Other subjects are allocated an appropriate amount of time, and good opportunities are made for pupils to use their basic skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. There is a particular focus on physical activities to ensure that pupils are healthy and fit. Pupils enjoy this and develop well as a result. There is specialist teaching in music, and French is taught to Years 5 and 6. This deepens and broadens pupils' experience. The school provides an excellent range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities. There is an excellent range of educational visits, and residential trips to add interest to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Pupils feel happy and safe and they are confident about taking any problems to their teachers. They know that any incidents, such as bullying or racism, will be dealt with firmly. Close attention is given to health and safety issues including child protection arrangements. Teachers and support staff are sensitive to the needs of all individuals and work very hard to support their personal and academic development. For example, 'Gym Trail' provides daily practice for pupils with physical difficulties and parents are encouraged to attend to support their children. Setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy help pupils to achieve well and teachers systematically guide pupils so that they are becoming skilled in checking their own work and making improvements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Overall, leadership and management are good. Aspects of the work of the head and his senior team are outstanding and have brought about clear improvements in the effectiveness of the school. They share a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have already been effective in improving significantly the teaching of writing. Achievement and standards are rising because of the work of the senior team in using data to set targets and raise teachers' expectations. Teachers are beginning to understand more clearly what their classes should be capable of. The governing body is effective and is monitoring and supporting the school well. Resources and staffing are used well to support pupils' learning and the school gives good value for money.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 October 2006 Dear Pupils The School Council, The Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex, CM13 0QR Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We enjoyed sharing your lessons and talking to you. You were all very positive about your school and we agree with you that it is a good school with caring, helpful teachers. I was very impressed with your behaviour in assembly and the two children who read aloud about Fingal's Cave were very confident and spoke very clearly. You are lucky to attend such a happy school. Good things about your school include: - you work hard in lessons and your behaviour is excellent - your headteacher and senior teachers have effective ideas about ways to improve the school - teachers work hard to make lessons interesting - teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors care for you very well indeed - the school council is working successfully to improve the school for all of you - you are encouraged to lead healthy and safe lives - you have an excellent range of clubs and visits. I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are: - improving the number of Year 6 pupils who get expected levels in tests for mathematics. Keep working hard and make the most of your time at this lovely school. Yours sincerely Paul Cosway Lead inspector