



# Chater Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 117158  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 290741  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** George Wallace

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Addiscombe Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Watford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Hertfordshire WD18 0WN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01923446686
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	186	<b>Fax number</b>	01923446676
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Sohbat Ali
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter McEntee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
7–11	6–7 November 2006	290741

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school draws pupils from a small catchment area in west central Watford. It is a two-form entry school with 186 pupils. The numbers of pupils in each year group vary significantly. The school is housed in modern buildings and whilst there is plenty of play space, it also has access to all weather sports facilities nearby. Pupils start at the school with levels of knowledge and understanding that are significantly below average. Three quarters of the children come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group is of Pakistani heritage with the next largest group, about a quarter, from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is much higher than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is declining and below the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school with outstanding features. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire overwhelmingly support this view. They strongly praise the school, its work and the enjoyment their children find in attending. One parent commented, 'I value the inclusive ethos and the way children are valued for who they are and how hard they try to achieve.' 'My children have always felt valued at the school, and been given a wide range of opportunities to excel.'

Standards have improved significantly over the past two years. Consistently good, and frequently outstanding, teaching nurtures children's learning from standards which are significantly below the national average when they join the school to standards which are average by the time they leave Year 6. So effective has been the teaching, especially for children whose English is not their first language, and for children who have learning difficulties and disabilities, that the extent of the value added to the children's education means that school is now in the top 25% of schools nationally. Whilst standards in writing for all pupils are in line with national averages, the proportion of girls reaching Level 5 is below average.

Pupils love and thoroughly enjoy their school. They feel very well supported, feel safe, and have many adults that they can turn to with any concerns. Behaviour and relationships are excellent. Children mix, play and work very well together. They respond extremely well to being encouraged to work in a wide variety of ways. All children are able to take an active part in learning.

Teaching is excellent with much that is outstanding so pupils' achievement is exceptionally good, as parents confirmed in response to their questionnaire. Teachers use a wide variety of methods to capture pupils' interest. Teachers are mindful of the range of abilities and English language competence of children and cater for them extremely well. Teaching assistants are effective in their support of teachers and children.

The curriculum is exciting and of an extremely high quality with a wide range of activities and topics, and enrichment opportunities including clubs. Visitors and visits are a frequent feature of school life and thoroughly enjoyed by pupils, as are the dramatic productions. Care, support and guidance for pupils are exceptionally strong. Children know how well they are doing in their learning, and how to improve. The school is extremely well led and managed. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is very ably supported by a relatively new deputy and team of very effective subject leaders. Governors know their school well and are effective. Resources are suitable and well managed. The learning environment is extremely pleasant. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and has really good capacity to improve further. It provides outstanding value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to extend their use of assessment procedures and refine their approaches to planning to raise standards further, especially to secure more Level 5 attainment for girls.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Achievement is excellent. Attainment on entry is significantly below average. However, by the end of Year 6 pupils have made such good progress that standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national averages, with a third of pupils reaching above average standards. Results over the past two years show a strong upward trend of improvement in English, mathematics and science as well as in other subjects. Standards have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Whether comparing results gained by boys and girls or children from different minority ethnic backgrounds, nearly all achieve equally well at reaching levels expected of them by the end of Year 6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, or for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, make exceptionally good progress and in many cases reach standards beyond those expected. This year all of the school targets set were significantly exceeded. In the past girls have outperformed boys in English and as a result the school refined its planning to encourage higher levels of achievement by boys. In 2006 this strategy was so successful that boys' attainment not only overtook girls' but reached levels above the national average, with many more boys than girls reaching Level 5, than girls. Art remains a real strength in the school and significant improvements have occurred in music, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology. Throughout the school there is a highly positive atmosphere and pupils clearly enjoy learning. Plans are in place to continue to raise standards for more able girls.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. Attendance is above average. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they rightly say this is because they all get on well together in this school with a diverse range of cultures. Pupils readily accept responsibility such as being playground 'buddies'. They learn how to stay safe and healthy and choose healthy meals at lunchtime. They enjoy keeping fit through physical education lessons and the many opportunities provided through the local sports partnership. Pupils make a good contribution to their community by fundraising for a wide range of charities, visit local places and take their responsibilities on the school council very seriously. They develop an excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through the caring ethos and the outstanding opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. Their sound basic skills equip them well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

There is an extremely strong sense of teamwork and commitment to improvement. Staff have very high expectations and challenge pupils extremely well. All adults take every opportunity to develop pupils' language skills, particularly for those who speak English as an additional language, and often through practical activities. Pupils work together effectively in pairs or small groups to develop their speaking and listening skills, their confidence, and to affirm their understanding. Teachers know their pupils very well. They match activities very closely to their children's needs, particularly in the mixed age classes. As a result, pupils say that learning is interesting and often fun. Strong support such as 'I'll start you off!' encourages those who are searching for the right vocabulary. Not a moment is wasted! Effective questions develop understanding and ensure that all are included in lessons. Where teaching is outstanding, there is a tangible sense of challenge for pupils to continually refine their work, and they respond with enthusiasm.

Very thorough assessment arrangements mean that staff quickly identify those pupils who need extra help. The school has rightly concentrated on developing its procedures in English, mathematics and science and work to sharpen their assessment procedures is planned for subjects such as history, religious education and personal, social and health education.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The exciting, exceptionally high quality curriculum encourages pupils to learn and contributes positively to their achievements and rising standards. Activities, such as 'Roman Day', give pupils a wealth of valuable experiences and link many subjects. An excellent range of visits, visitors and out of school activities make learning interesting and encourage a good range of skills. Clubs include yoga, dance, music, French and many sports. These are greatly enjoyed by the pupils. There is very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The school ethos is enhanced by vibrant displays, some of which have been produced with the support of visiting artists. Music also has a high profile with all pupils in Year 5 enthusiastically learning to play a brass instrument. The school celebrates its cultural diversity very effectively, for example, by studying the national sports of a wide range of countries.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

This is an extremely caring school where people are welcome and therefore pupils and their parents feel valued. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are very rigorous and staff are well trained. Pupils' progress is thoroughly tracked. Pupils know what to do

to improve and have clear targets to help them. They particularly like the way that teachers give them 'moving on' comments when they mark their work. Very effective support is given to pupils who need it. When necessary, the school works closely with outside agencies to ensure appropriate support. Newcomers are helped to settle very quickly and those who arrive with little or no English are matched with a friend who helps them build up their vocabulary. Sometimes, these pupils complete their work in their home language so that they can take part in lessons. Teachers are invariably successful in ensuring that such pupils can receive feedback and guidance arising from their work, and progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a very strong focus on raising standards, ensuring that children enjoy school and making sure that equality of opportunity is central to school life. The relatively new headteacher has galvanised a strong team of teachers and support staff, together with an effective and committed governing body, to steer improvements throughout the school. Developments arise from careful, intelligent analysis and evaluation of information drawn from a wide range of sources. This is a listening school and as such is responsive to its community in terms of developments that occur or explanations of directions taken. The school's self-evaluation system is working extremely well. It is an ambitious school with a clear vision. Staff morale is high. Their personal and professional development is taken very seriously. Good resources are used effectively. Financial information indicates that control of the budget is secure and that the school is clear about its expenditure patterns.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

8 November 2006

Dear Children

Chater Junior School, Addiscombe Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 0WN

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. It was lovely to meet you and thank you making us feel so welcome. It is clear that you love your school and really enjoy all the different things you do at school. We also asked your parents about your school and they agree that it is a great school.

Your school has improved over the last two years. All staff have worked extremely hard to ensure that the things you do are enjoyable, that you feel safe and secure and above all you make really good progress in your lessons. The standard of your English, mathematics and science work is what we would expect for children of your age, and many of you are reaching standards above this. Those of you who sometimes find learning difficult, or speak English in addition to your home language, are working really hard and as a result you are making very good progress. All of you are proud of your work and set it out neatly. Your eagerness to learn and take part in lessons and other activities is impressive. Therefore your excellent behaviour, the superb way you play, work and mix with each other, and your enjoyment of what you do together, combined with outstanding teaching enables you all to achieve extremely well. Very well done and keep it up!

We spoke with a large number of you at different times and were delighted to hear about all the things you do. You have plenty of clubs to choose from after school, go on many visits and you find the many visitors to the school exciting and enjoyable to be with. Art and music are strong in the school and your work is also improving in other subjects, especially in PE, history and design and technology. We are very pleased that you know there are always adults you feel comfortable talking to if you have any problems or concerns.

As a result of what we have seen we feel confident that the school will continue to improve. We have asked the school to help some of you, especially the girls to attain even higher standards.

We hope that you continue to enjoy going to school, and we wish you all very well for the future.

George Wallace

(Lead inspector)