

# Quilters Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114801
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326068
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanne Harvey

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	251
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Gill palmer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs June Dodd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Laindon Road Billericay Essex CM12 9LD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01277 652339
<b>Fax number</b>	01277 631792

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a slightly larger than average school. It serves a stable and socio-economically positive part of Billericay. The proportion of the pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. There is a small number of pupils from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few have English as an additional language. A below average proportion of the pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of those have moderate learning difficulties.

The school has an Advanced Healthy Schools Award, an Activemark Award and Investors in People. It is part of a large group of local schools who form the Billericay Education Community to share new developments and good practice.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good and improving school. Some of its features are outstanding. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and consistently attain standards that are above those expected in English, mathematics and science. Currently standards are on track to be exceptionally high in English as the consistently very high standards in reading look set to be matched by improved standards in writing. Pupils who have a special educational need are supported exceptionally well and make outstanding progress. The headteacher and senior leaders are effective in leading the school and in working in partnership with staff, governors, parents and other agencies to promote its remarkably caring, respectful and inclusive ethos. One parent said astutely, 'Quilters offers a great balance for all children. It offers an abundance of sports and after school clubs. It offers lots of creativity and academically it offers a fantastic standard. It is a very well managed, fun, hardworking and happy school. It successfully prepares children for their next stage in life'. This view was representative of many who responded to the inspection questionnaire and echoes the views expressed by staff, governors and pupils.

Pupils talk with excitement about the outstanding curriculum they are offered. Themed topics, which involve in-depth study across many subjects, bring learning alive and provide lasting memories. The positive impact of this creative curriculum can be seen in the even higher standards recently attained in writing. Senior leaders lack complacency and are now beginning to turn their attention to ensuring a similar improvement in mathematics. They have started by offering pupils more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in practical ways in different subjects. Because their self-evaluation is accurate, leaders know that teaching is mostly good, and indeed some seen during the inspection was exemplary. They know the consistent strengths and also where the very best features seen are not yet consistently applied. New leaders are being introduced to strategies designed to help them to ensure that the exemplary features of teaching and learning become the norm.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted exceptionally well. Not least because of the outstanding care and guidance given to all. Underpinned by the strong direction given by the headteacher, it is clear that all adults are committed to ensuring that all pupils are extremely happy, receive excellent care and are equipped with the skills to prepare them outstandingly well for their future lives. It is no surprise, therefore, that pupils love coming to school. They are keen to learn, attend well and their expectations for future success are high. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they demonstrate that they are proud to take on extra responsibilities that make a real difference to life in school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Further raise standards in mathematics by giving pupils even more opportunities to use their skills in practical situations and in other subjects.
- Ensure all leaders and managers are able to play their full part in bringing consistency to the quality of teaching and learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. Since the last inspection the progress in Years 3 and 4 has improved and this is resulting in higher standards in all years. Pupils' attainment on entry is often above average but there is a full range of ability evident.

For example, the current Year 3 has a well above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The school's tracking shows that pupils who find learning difficult often make excellent progress, achieving levels beyond those normally expected. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls, while those learning English as an additional language make good progress. As a result of the good teaching and the excellent curriculum, standards in writing have risen dramatically and are close to the high standards already achieved in reading. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve exceptionally high standards in English this year. Standards in science and mathematics are above average but in mathematics the application of pupils' learning in different situations remains an area for improvement, although high attainers do achieve exceptionally well in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and in art and design are also above those expected.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding. They personify the caring values and ethos of the school. They are highly respectful of others and collaborate extremely well together to play their part in ensuring that Quilters is happy and harmonious. They clearly appreciate the awe and wonder they experience through the many rich curricular opportunities they are offered. They develop the confidence to express their likes and dislikes. They also demonstrate a mature appreciation of cultural diversity. For example, they show and excellent knowledge of, and interest in, the lives of others and demonstrate that they will not tolerate racist attitudes. Their behaviour is exemplary.

Pupils proudly take on and effectively fulfil their many additional responsibilities. For example, the school council, the environmental team and peer mediators have a real impact on the smooth running of the school. The house system motivates pupils to succeed and also results in a great deal of money being raised for charities as they compete against each other. Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe and healthy is outstanding. They tuck in to healthy school lunches and speak excitedly about sport, in which they enjoy a great deal of success within and beyond the school. They are able to talk knowledgeably, for example, about internet safety. Many topics test their business enterprise skills and help to prepare them for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

All adults are excellent role models and promote high quality relationships. As a result, pupils develop extremely positive attitudes to their learning and work hard. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge which they use to conscientiously plan stimulating learning activities and to ask probing questions. They make sure that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. Excellent support is given to those who find their learning more difficult or who have a specific learning difficulty, either individually or in groups, by able teaching assistants.

Some outstanding lessons were seen, delivered both by class teachers and by high level teaching assistants. Features of these lessons included a brisk pace, challenge for the most able throughout, and the consistent use of excellent marking. In these lessons, pupils demonstrated that they were able to accurately evaluate their own success. School leaders are aware that these exemplary features are not yet consistently applied across school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is rich, vibrant and exciting. Learning is very well planned so that pupils of all abilities benefit from activities across the curriculum that are both challenging and thought provoking. The school places an excellent emphasis on the development of pupils' writing skills. The push on writing in a cross-curricular manner has seen a rise in standards that are now significantly above average. ICT is fully integrated into lessons and adds significantly to pupils' learning. Pupils learn French and play a wide range of musical instruments. The physical education curriculum is well developed and all pupils have weekly swimming lessons at the on-site pool. Take up for the many and varied extra curricular activities is high and the curriculum is supported well by the wide range of educational visits provided. These are much enjoyed by pupils and include residential visits for pupils in Year 4 upwards, where they develop research and study skills and participate in outdoor adventurous activities. Regular themed events, the weekly enrichment afternoons and the creative and sporting activities offered are described by pupils as 'brilliant and fun'. The excellent personal and social education programme is well planned across all years and contributes directly to the extremely positive outcomes in personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Procedures are rigorous in ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Pastoral care is exceptional and this high quality lies at the heart of all the school's work, being central to its ethos. As a result, personal development and well-being are outstanding, with pupils becoming well rounded individuals and prepared exceptionally well for the future. There is early identification of those who may be vulnerable or who have specific needs. Quick and appropriate intervention from highly skilled practitioners ensure that barriers to learning are minimised and everyone is included. Consequently, pupils who find learning difficult often make exceptional progress. Academic guidance was overhauled two years ago. Procedures are extremely rigorous for checking on pupils' progress and for setting and reviewing targets. The impact of this can readily be seen, for example, in the standards now being attained in writing.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides high quality leadership and is, as one teacher put it, 'the glue that holds it all together.' This reflects her position at the heart of the school's caring ethos. She ensures that all staff are clear about and share her strategic vision. She is well supported by a good and effective senior leadership team through which the full range of leadership tasks are delegated. A major strength is the way the work of the school is regularly evaluated and its success monitored by senior staff. Because of this the school's self evaluation is accurate and appropriate priorities for improvement are recognised. For example, the auditing of the school's work on promoting pupils' understanding about community diversity showed a need for more understanding about different communities in this country and so a link to a school in Cornwall is being developed in addition to a link already well established with a school in Africa. The remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning have also been recognised. Subject leadership

has been affected by staffing changes recently and those with new roles need time to establish themselves. Leaders set appropriately challenging targets and are continually looking to raise standards further. This is evident in the work done recently to improve performance. Leaders clearly demonstrate a lack of complacency and a willingness to look beyond the school for support and expertise. The governing body is effective in holding the school to account, has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and is looking forward to developing even more rigour in its monitoring role. The improvements made since the last inspection show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	1

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

11 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Quilters Junior School, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LD

We were pleased to meet you and all the staff and very much enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome, talking to us and helping us to find out so much about you and your school. We particularly enjoyed seeing you proudly carry out the jobs that you do around school, cooperating so well together and looking after each other.

You go to a good school where all the grown-ups do their best for you. They look after you and care for you extremely well. Your teachers and teaching assistants make learning extremely interesting and enjoyable and they work hard to help you make good progress in lessons. Some of you who find learning especially difficult are supported so well that you make outstanding progress. Your excellent behaviour and manners in class, around school and in the playground, help you to learn well too. It is clear that you are very happy at school. Your teachers and your friends help you to feel important and safe there.

Everyone at school is keen to find ways to help you do as well as you possibly can. Although you make good progress by the time you leave the school, and reach standards which are better than most pupils of your age in all subjects, most of you do even better in English than you do in mathematics. Therefore, we have asked the teachers to give you even more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills in other subjects. Though teaching is good, and sometimes it is excellent, we have also asked that everyone who leads the school, including governors and new leaders, are helped to play their full part in making sure that all the teaching is as good as the best we saw.

We are sure that the headteacher and all the other staff will continue to do everything they can to help you. You can play your part by continuing to behave extremely well, working hard and coming to school every day.

We would like to wish you the very best for the future.

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector