

# Janet Duke Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114993
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326106
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Jones

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	245
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Diane Dickson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Harriet Phelps Knights
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Markhams Chase Laindon Basildon Essex SS15 5LS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 543744
<b>Fax number</b>	01268 490396

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized school in Basildon, Essex. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. The percentage of pupils who qualify for a free school meal is above average. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in three Reception classes. The current headteacher has been seconded to act as executive headteacher to the junior school which shares the site.

The school has received several awards including the Activemark for sport, the Eco School Bronze award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools award.

## 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 school in which pupils do well. Parents appreciate the way in which the school works in very close partnership with them. Inspectors agree with parents who feel that the school is one where pupils make good progress in a safe and caring environment.

Achievement is good. From a starting point which is below that expected for their age when they begin school, pupils make good progress in the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. This leads to standards that are average and sometimes above by the time they leave at the end of Year 2. The school is currently focusing on raising standards in writing through strategies which provide pupils with increased opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. It has enjoyed some success, and the school appreciates there is further work to be done.

Pupils develop good personal skills because the school cares for and supports them very well and has an inclusive ethos. This leads to good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility by taking on jobs around the school that contribute to community life. For example, older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being 'playground pals' helping younger pupils to enjoy their playtimes. The school council is well developed, and plays an active part in the life of the school. Pastoral care is excellent and this ensures that pupils feel particularly safe and adopt safe practices extremely well. Academic guidance is satisfactory: a system of target setting is in place but it is not embedded; marking lacks consistency and does not engage pupils well enough in their learning.

Teaching is good and helps pupils to learn well. Teaching is especially good when lessons are lively and imaginative; this results in a good pace to learning. Classes are managed effectively and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to learning and closely support those with additional needs. The curriculum is planned well and the broad range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors enrich learning. The good-quality displays of pupils' work and wide range of playground facilities, such as the trim trail, contribute to the stimulating learning environment.

The school has improved well since it was last inspected. Teaching quality has improved, and access to lunchtime and after-school clubs has increased. Attendance rates, while remaining below average, are rising because the school works hard to encourage good attendance. These improvements are due to good leadership and management. The headteacher's energy and dedication are pivotal to the school's success. By carefully restructuring senior management, she has successfully ensured greater accountability and clearly defined leadership roles. Staff work closely together with a clarity of purpose and this has led to continued improvement. Senior managers and staff share good commitment to pupils and check on how well they are doing. There are well developed plans for subject leaders to monitor more closely the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. The school is well supported by governors and has good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception classes, with levels of attainment that are below those typically found especially in their communication skills. They make good progress overall so that by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, they meet the expected levels in all areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy. Achievement is strongest in personal, social

and emotional development and weakest in communication, language and literacy. Staff know this well and are working together to improve the children's skills in this area.

Personal development and well-being are good. Children are friendly and work collaboratively as a team. They demonstrate independence in their self-chosen activities and persist at tasks. Learning and development are good. Children respond with good enjoyment to the learning environment, which provides them with a variety of stimulating opportunities both in the classrooms and outside. However, there is less support available in the outdoor area for those involved in child-initiated play. Leadership and management are good. Adults work closely as a team, planning together to provide first-hand practical activities, which allow children to explore the world around them. Staff attend to their professional development and are willing to learn and to improve their practice. Assessment procedures are well established but are not used rigorously enough to direct future planning, including observations based on child-initiated play, in order to increase progress. Staff are sensitive to the children's needs and are diligent in promoting their welfare. They work closely with agencies to support the children's needs. Staff work very well with parents, providing a smooth transfer for their children into the life of the school.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Give pupils a clearer understanding of the next steps in their learning by:

- improving the quality of marking
- ensuring regular and clear references are made to targets in learning activities.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout their time in the school. Standards have been average or above by the end of Year 2. Although they are set to dip a little this year they still represent good progress from the pupils' starting points. Standards are currently just above average in mathematics and a little below average in reading and writing. All groups of pupils do well, including the more able, the few who are learning English as an additional language and those who have additional learning needs. The school's good focus on improving standards in writing is paying off. Progress has accelerated in this area, although the school recognises that there is further work to do by increasing opportunities to write in a range of subjects across the curriculum.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They have developed a satisfactory understanding of their own cultures and the culture of others around them. Their enjoyment is clearly reflected in their good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils like to come to school and they get on well with each other. However, their attendance although improving, remains satisfactory. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and this contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. Pupils feel very safe and valued and are confident in asking for help when they need it. They understand the importance of healthy eating and engage well in physical activities and games. They contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community. They participate enthusiastically in their roles as class and school councilors. They are rightly proud of their contribution to improving the

school's environment. For example, they take part in recycling activities and put up health and safety posters such as 'no climbing of trees'. In the community, they take an active part in a wide range of activities and raise funds to support those who are less fortunate than themselves. Their good behaviour and basic skills contribute effectively to their economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy strong relationships with their teachers and maintain a good rapport with them in lessons and around the school. High expectations for good behaviour and teamwork from the staff mean that learning proceeds at a good pace. Lesson plans say clearly what pupils with different abilities will learn and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to capture their attention. Although most teaching is good, it becomes satisfactory occasionally when tasks are not matched closely enough to the different needs of individuals. Marking is inconsistent. In the best examples, it is helpful and supports learning but too often, it does not provide enough information to pupils as to how to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum provides rich and well-balanced experiences for the pupils. Interesting displays of pupils' work contribute to the stimulating learning environment. Learning is well planned and the school places an increasingly appropriate emphasis on the development of pupils' writing skills. The school intends to strengthen the curriculum by developing the links between subjects and building upon the skills of pupils. Information and communication technology is integrated into lessons and adds much to pupils' learning. Take up for the many extra-curricular activities is high and the curriculum is supported by a good range of educational visits and visitors to the school. Regular themed events such as the recent science week and the mathematics day are much enjoyed by pupils. The good personal and social education programme is well planned across all years and contributes directly to the positive outcomes in personal development.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. They are underpinned by a very caring ethos where every child really does matter. Parents acknowledge this and one commented, 'The school pulls together and works well as a team'. All staff take excellent care to protect pupils and provide well for their different needs. This means ensuring that the curriculum, teaching and support are adapted to meet, and make the most of, each pupil's skills and talents. As a result, those pupils who have learning difficulties, the particularly new pupils to the school or those at earlier stages of learning English receive tailored care and support to help them to do well. The school works in close partnership with a range of agencies to support them and their families. Child protection, health and safety and risk assessment procedures are secure and are regularly reviewed. Targets are in place but they are rarely referred to in teaching and marking.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher's very good leadership and management are key to the welcoming, friendly nature of the school and the good achievement of the pupils. The headteacher demonstrates an excellent commitment to the school and a very clear vision for the future. She is well supported by the recently reformed senior leadership team. Together, they keep a very careful check on standards and the quality of teaching. Subject leaders are well supported by the headteacher in developing their role. The school evaluates its performance effectively and uses the information to feed into a comprehensive school development plan. Safeguarding procedures meet legal requirements and there are suitable arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. There are well developed and effective links with the local community, but pupils' understanding of other communities is limited. The school recognises this and has well-developed plans to improve this aspect. Governors know the school well and provide a good level of challenge. They evaluate the work of the school and effectively hold school leaders to account.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	2

<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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

## 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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## 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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

24 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Janet Duke Infant School, Basildon, SS15 5LS

Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to you. You attend a happy and friendly school. Good things about your school include the fact that:

- you have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves safe
- you make good progress in your work
- the headteacher and staff are very good at looking after you
- there is a very good partnership in place between the school and your parents
- you concentrate and behave well in lessons
- you enjoy school and all the activities your teachers plan for you
- the school environment is welcoming and attractive
- the school leaders have good ideas about ways to improve the school.

We have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are to make sure that:

- regular use is made of targets in all classes
- marking helps you to know what you need to do next in your learning.

You can help by listening well, following your teacher's advice and keeping working as hard as you can. Enjoy all the things you are learning at school.

Yours faithfully

Ian Jones

Lead inspector