

Buttsbury Junior School

Norsey View Drive, Billericay, CM12 0QR

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The very strong leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by leaders at all levels and governors, has improved teaching and raised pupils' achievement.
- Governors are ambitious for the school and are effective in holding leaders to account for continued improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils behave well and are kept safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for. This, their good behaviour and the responsibilities they take on in school prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers demonstrate high expectations for the behaviour and achievement of their pupils.
- Pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Parents are right to have confidence in the school because it continues to improve. Almost all parents who expressed a view would recommend it to others. They greatly appreciate that the headteacher is approachable and keeps them very well informed about all aspects of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers are skilled in designing learning activities that challenge all pupils, especially the most able, to deepen their understanding so that they reach even higher standards.
- The marking of pupils' work is not always effective in giving pupils guidance about how to improve it or in ensuring they respond to the advice given. This means that pupils do not improve their work sufficiently in some classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons, four of which were seen jointly with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher. They made a number of short visits to lessons and observed small groups of pupils taught by teachers and teaching assistants. The inspectors also listened to pupils in Years 3 and 6 read to them.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and a representative of the local authority. A telephone discussion was held with the School Improvement Partner.
- The inspectors took account of 133 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They talked to parents in the morning when they accompanied their children to school.
- Inspectors considered 54 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including: the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; school improvement planning; documentation relating to teachers' performance over time; and records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Tusha Chakraborti, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Diana Songer-Hudgell	Additional Inspector
Christopher Birtles	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for disadvantaged pupils in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well-below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school converted to become an academy school on 1 May 2011.
- The school is a member of the Billericay Community Trust and works closely with other primary schools and Billericay SCITT (school-centred initial teacher training).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that more is outstanding and accelerate pupils' progress in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - teachers use information on pupils' progress and attainment to challenge pupils of all abilities to extend their knowledge and skills and deepen their understanding in all subjects
 - teachers always give the most-able pupils demanding tasks so that they make faster progress
 - marking provides pupils with consistently clear guidance on how to improve their work to achieve even higher standards, and teachers ensure that pupils respond to the guidance given and learn from their mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- With the good support and commitment of other leaders and governors, the outstanding leadership of the headteacher has significantly improved teaching and learning. Leaders and governors have successfully addressed the areas for improvement raised at the last inspection. Leaders successfully foster a culture where good teaching and pupils' responsible behaviour are well established. Consequently, staff and parents are right to be positive about the work of the school.
- The quality of teaching is monitored rigorously. Senior leaders make frequent observations of pupils' learning and work. This monitoring is effectively linked to a comprehensive development programme to support staff to improve their skills. Weekly progress-review sessions evaluate the impact of the planning of learning and teaching on pupils' progress. This process is successful in helping teachers to perform well.
- The rigorous procedures for monitoring teachers' performance ensure that all teachers are held responsible for their pupils' achievement. Teachers are set challenging targets for pupils' progress and attainment, which are reviewed regularly to judge the impact of their teaching. This robust system ensures that those teachers who meet the ambitious targets set for them move up the salary scale and that others do not.
- While some middle leaders are new to their roles, they have quickly developed a very clear understanding of their responsibilities, and are carrying them out effectively. This is because they are very well supported by the senior leaders and have a thorough training programme. As a result, middle leaders make a positive contribution to teaching quality and to pupils' achievement.
- The new curriculum is well planned and gives pupils opportunities to enhance their learning and skills through a wide range of subjects, activities, events and clubs. These learning opportunities help pupils to develop positive attitudes to their work. Music, art and drama play an important part in pupils' life in school. There are initiatives to celebrate pupils' enjoyment of reading and knowledge of books. For example, pupils dressed up as their chosen characters and confidently explained their choices. The range of learning opportunities pupils receive supports their progress and achievement well.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' personal skills, for example through a wide range of sporting opportunities and facilities that meet the needs of all pupils. Developing pupils' understanding of different religions helps them to reflect on the connections between spirituality and action in their own lives. These activities and the values prominent in the school, such as tolerance and respect for others, promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Consequently, they behave well and are well prepared for life in modern British society.
- The primary school physical education and sport premium is used to provide specialist coaches for some competitive sports activities and to train staff to raise their expertise in sports. Pupils' involvement in sport is very high and they thoroughly enjoy participating in – and winning – inter-school and county sports events. Consequently, they gain in health and physical well-being.
- Safeguarding systems meet current requirements and policies are applied consistently, so that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The pupil premium funding is used very effectively to ensure that the disadvantaged pupils achieve particularly well. Their success is due to very effective support within each class.
- The school is committed to equal opportunities for all its pupils and focuses strongly on raising the achievement of all groups and tackling any discrimination. This commitment is evident in the opportunities it provides for all pupils to extend their learning and skills through a wide range of subjects, events and clubs.

■ The local authority has provided very effective support in moving the school forward since the last inspection, especially in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The impact is shown in good teaching across the school. The leaders have worked closely with the local authority and other local schools in extending the expertise of staff and sharing good practice.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is effective and well organised. Governors are highly supportive but also ensure that leaders and staff are sharply focused on raising pupils' achievement. They ask astute and probing questions about pupils' performance when leaders report to them. Governors have attended training on analysing data on progress and attainment and know how pupils' performance compares with that of schools nationally. They have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards. A well-managed range of committees monitor the effectiveness of the leadership team in improving all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors successfully monitor how effectively additional funds are spent. They make sure that funding has the impact intended, particularly in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They know that teaching is good and ensure the management of teachers' performance is effective in raising its quality. Governors tackle any underperformance in teaching directly. They make sure that teachers are rewarded only when they are able to raise achievement. Governors ensure that the safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils understand the school's system for managing behaviour and consider it fair. They aspire to improve their own behaviour because reflection upon their own actions reinforces the value of respect for others celebrated in school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, listen attentively to teachers and respond immediately to instructions. They explain that the atmosphere in school is 'very friendly' and say that this helps them learn well. Occasionally, however, pupils lose concentration because the work does not challenge or engage them effectively.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities such as 'play buddies', members of the school council and raising funds for national and international charities. They value their links with schools in Kenya and in America. During the inspection, they celebrated a day focused on books and reading, and made their own stories into books for a school in Kenya as part of the school's partnership work.
- The school uses effective systems to promote good attendance. Good attendance is rewarded and poor attendance is followed up rigorously. As a result, attendance is above the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. As a result, pupils say they feel safe in school at all times.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe because this is closely considered and discussed well in lessons. They are able to explain the dangers of the misuse of the internet, social-networking sites and drugs, and know what to do if they should encounter such problems.
- Pupils are well aware of the different forms bullying can take. They say that it is rare in school. They are confident that any incidents of bullying will be dealt with quickly by teachers and other adults.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are right to be appreciative of the good quality of care and support the school provides for their children. All staff are checked prior to appointment and the building is kept secure.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching has resulted in teaching that is typically good, with some examples of outstanding practice. Good teaching is having a direct impact on raising pupils' achievement. Excellent relationships between all adults and pupils help to promote good learning. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in school and in lessons.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. Teachers ask questions to assess pupils' progress and to extend their knowledge and understanding further. In most lessons, pupils are given opportunities to build on their prior learning. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 6, pupils wrote biographies based on an interview they had conducted with a family member.
- Reading and writing are well taught. Teachers ensure that pupils write for different purposes and enough to reinforce their written skills. Reading sessions include stimulating discussions on different styles of writing by different authors. These activities support pupils' reading and writing skills well. Teachers set appropriate homework regularly to consolidate what is taught at school.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their calculation and investigating skills and apply them with confidence. As a result, pupils have made rapid progress in mathematics over the past year.
- Teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' learning. They work well with teachers and show a good understanding of how to support targeted pupils, including those who have special educational needs. Recent staff training and the resulting extra support are helping disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to make faster progress.
- Teachers plan learning in lessons well to make it interesting and engaging. In most lessons, they provide all abilities with suitably challenging tasks. However, not all teachers make effective use of the assessment information on pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that work is sufficiently demanding to stretch all groups of pupils, especially the most able.
- In most classes, teachers mark pupils' work regularly and give clear and helpful guidance on what pupils should do to improve their work so they learn more and make better progress. However, in some classes the guidance and comments on pupils' work do not enable pupils to know how to improve their work. Furthermore, pupils are not always required to respond by correcting and learning from their mistakes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved since the last inspection and is good. Lesson observations, pupils' work, individual case studies and the school's own assessments at the start and end of each term show that pupils have made accelerated progress over the past two years.
- Since the last inspection, Year 6 pupils have attained standards which are well above national averages in all areas. In 2014, a high proportion of pupils attained Level 5 or above in writing, mathematics and in spelling, punctuation and grammar. While their performance in reading was slightly less strong, it was still ahead of national results at this level.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in all areas as they move up the school. Most of them develop a clear understanding of how to write effectively for different purposes and how to apply their mathematical skills in calculations and problem solving. However, not all of them achieve as well as they could and reach even higher standards. This is because teachers do not always give them hard enough work to challenge them fully to make more rapid progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress from their different starting points. The school has acted decisively to improve the support system for these pupils. This gives the pupils a well-planned literacy and numeracy programme that is effective in speeding up their progress. As a result, these pupils make good gains in their learning.

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well. They attain standards at least in line with those of their peers and often better.

- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were three terms ahead of their classmates in reading, half a term ahead in writing, approximately two terms ahead in grammar, punctuation and spelling, but slightly behind their classmates in mathematics. Compared with all pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were three terms ahead in reading, one term ahead in writing and three and half terms ahead in grammar, punctuation and spelling. In mathematics, they were slightly ahead of other pupils nationally.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136734
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	453842

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	494
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Stuart
Headteacher	Ann Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2013
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