

# Quilters Infant School

Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex CM12 9LD

## Inspection dates

14–15 November 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader. He has gained the trust and respect of the entire school community. The school is continually improving under his leadership.
- Pupils achieve extremely well in English, mathematics and a wide range of other subjects. The proportion of pupils that reach the expected standards in Year 2 is much higher than the national average.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have ensured that staff are vigilant and that appropriate procedures are in place to deal with child protection concerns when they arise.
- Pupils demonstrate particularly strong attitudes to learning. The school's system for motivating and rewarding pupils is extremely effective.
- Governors know the school very well. They are highly effective in holding leaders to account.
- Leaders ensure that there is a rich, stimulating curriculum, both within and beyond the school day, that meets pupils' needs exceptionally well.
- Teaching is consistently strong throughout the school. Teachers use assessment very effectively to identify gaps and 'next steps' in pupils' learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils make very strong progress from their starting points because they are provided with the right support to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They listen carefully to adults and follow instructions quickly.
- The early years provision is outstanding. This ensures that children's educational careers get off to an excellent start.
- The federation's newly established leadership teams have not yet had to time to impact fully on the work of the school.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Develop the cross-federation leadership teams so that they have greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and outcomes in the subjects that they are responsible for.
- Maintain and build on the school's current very high standards in English, mathematics and across the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher has very quickly gained the respect and affections of the entire school community. People follow where he leads, and, as a result, the school is now clearly outstanding and is continuing to improve.
- The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, who shares his high expectations and commitment to the school. The senior leaders set aspirational targets for staff about aspects of their practice and about outcomes for pupils. Between them, they provide the support and encouragement staff need to enable them to reach these targets.
- The school is now federated with the junior school on the same site. Although these arrangements are still relatively new, their benefits are already clear. Leadership teams have been established to focus on specific issues throughout the federation. For example, the core leadership team makes sure that both the quality of teaching and outcomes in English and mathematics are strong. Leaders in the creative team ensure that subjects such as music, art and design technology are also given an appropriately high focus.
- There are early signs that these newly established leadership teams are already starting to have a positive impact on improving the school yet further. For example, the non-core leadership team has introduced systems that have strengthened assessment of subjects such as history and geography. Although the new federation-wide approach to leadership is developing well and has already had some success, there has not yet been enough time for the impact of leaders' work to be developed in full.
- The school has a particularly strong ethos, and this has a notable impact on how well pupils do during their time at the school. The school's mission is to develop 'well-rounded, confident pupils' who 'take risks, persevere and seek challenge', and 'who are resilient to set-backs, and are able to continually develop their abilities and talents'. It does this particularly well.
- Every pupil at Quilters Infant School is valued enormously as an individual. Pupils are known as 'Quilteenees', identifying them clearly as members of the school 'family'. Quilteenees are encouraged and enabled to become effective learners through the school's highly effective strategy for promoting strong learning behaviours.
- The school's mascot 'Wadeybear' wears a range of differently coloured capes, each giving him a different learning 'super power'. Pupils are fully aware of the seven learning 'super powers' and can list them with ease: bravery, proactivity, perseverance, concentration, independence, team work and quality. As well as being able to name them all, pupils also know exactly what each one means. For example, a pupil explained 'proactivity' to the lead inspector by saying it is: 'when you do something yourself without anyone asking'.
- Pupils are given capes to wear to encourage them, for example, to persevere or to be brave, or to reward them for using these 'super powers'. Pupils gradually become better able to 'put on' a metaphorical cape, for example to help them work independently, because the system is such a fundamental part of school life, in every

classroom and in every activity. This has a very clear impact on pupils' outcomes, their behaviour and their happiness at school.

- The school's curriculum is very well developed. Pupils work towards completing the 'infant adventure' by the time they leave the school. This includes 16 things for pupils to take part in or achieve by the end of Year 2. For example, part of the 'infant adventure' is to 'sing in the local community' and another part is to 'represent my school'. The framework provided by this approach ensures that all pupils receive the rounded education that the school aims to provide.
- The school uses a topic-based approach to its curriculum. Pupils learn about topics such as 'toys' and 'into the darkness'. Wherever possible, teachers take advantage of opportunities to teach national curriculum subjects through the over-arching topics. However, they are careful to ensure that these links are appropriate and meaningful, and not superficial and tenuous. Leaders have found that this approach to the curriculum works very well to encourage pupils' interest in their learning and to motivate them to want to do more and learn more.
- The school's provision for the few pupils with SEND and/or disabilities is led extremely well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows each pupil's needs and ensures that appropriate measures are put in place to enable the pupils to be successful learners. The SENCo provides training for teaching assistants, so that they have the knowledge and skills they need to support pupils effectively. Pupils with SEND make very strong progress from their individual starting points, as a result of this strong leadership.
- The school receives a very small amount of pupil premium grant, in line with the very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils who attend the school. Despite this group being so few in number, leaders ensure that the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has an appropriately high focus. Leaders know each of the pupils well as individuals, and they ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to deal with pupils' individual barriers to learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress from their individual starting points.
- The sport premium is spent effectively. Leaders plan carefully how the funding will be spent and evaluate whether it is having the desired impact. For example, funding is used to provide pupils with opportunities to take part in a wider range of sports clubs, including multi-skills, basketball, street dance and karate. Pupils now achieve very well in physical education, with a third of pupils working at a higher level than is typical for their age.
- Parental satisfaction is extremely high. An exceptionally large proportion of parents and carers responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, with a similarly high proportion choosing to add additional comments in support of the school. Every parent who responded to the survey said that they would recommend the school to others.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governing body is a strength of the school. From two separate organisations, one for the infant school and one for the adjacent junior school, a single and effective body has quickly emerged to work jointly and effectively across the two schools in the federation.

- Governors bring a wide range of skills, knowledge and experiences to their roles. For example, the governing body includes a retired headteacher, a psychologist, a surveyor and a banker. This breadth of knowledge helps the governing body to fulfil its corporate responsibilities very well.
- Governors know the school very well and share the headteacher's vision and high expectations. They have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's many strengths. They challenge leaders fully and regularly ask probing questions to ensure that the school continues to improve.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has a high profile at Quilters Infant School. The school's website has a safeguarding section, which contains a wealth of useful information and resources about the subject. For example, the website includes links to a range of videos about e-safety and safe use of the internet for parents to use at home with their children.
- Systems around the safer recruitment of staff are very thorough and well established. The school's single central record of pre-appointment checks is up to date and meets statutory requirements. Leaders and governors commission the local authority to carry out an annual check of these processes to assure themselves that they are suitably strong and that all the necessary requirements are met.
- The headteacher has an excellent understanding of his role as the school's designated safeguarding lead. He ensures that staff receive appropriate training, and that this is updated regularly. The headteacher has ensured that the school has an open culture, where staff feel able to raise any concerns that they may have, in the knowledge that these will be listened to and that timely action will be taken if it is appropriate to do so.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Teaching staff ensure that the school's chosen approach to developing pupils' learning skills is used consistently throughout the day. Teachers are skilled at noticing when to give a pupil, for example, the 'concentration cape' to support him or her with the additional focus needed to complete their work accurately and well. The school's system supports pupils effectively to adopt the 'super-powers' needed to help them to become great learners.
- Teaching staff are highly effective in focusing on the importance of trying hard and doing your best. Pupils understand the concept of producing their best-quality work. This work is celebrated widely, and effort is valued. The 'Quilteenee Way' is a special corridor within the school where the best work of every pupil is displayed, demonstrating the value with which pupils' achievements are regarded.
- Staff know their pupils very well. This enables them to make choices about their teaching practice that benefit pupils and help them to make better progress. Teachers are very skilled at continually checking pupils' understanding of what they have been taught. Teachers choose to group pupils for different activities according to their assessed needs. This enables staff to make sure that pupils' individual needs are responded to rapidly.

- Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants start their working day almost an hour before the school day starts officially. This enables them to liaise with teachers about the work that they are to do. It also provides time for teaching assistants to work directly with small groups of pupils to help them fill identified gaps in their learning before the school day starts. The school has found that this works particularly well in ensuring that pupils catch up quickly.
- Pupils are routinely provided with appropriate challenge. Teachers plan their teaching well and think carefully about the tasks that they give pupils to do.
- Teaching staff have excellent behaviour management skills. Classrooms are welcoming and happy places. Teachers ensure that the school's rules are followed consistently and that expectations are high. They use a variety of strategies to encourage pupils to join in fully and to behave extremely well.
- Swimming is taught very well. All pupils, including those in the early years, have a weekly swimming lesson in the school's indoor pool. Where pupils have particular needs, separate or additional lessons are put in place. As a result, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, almost all pupils can swim the length of the pool.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school focuses very strongly on pupils as individuals. It matters enormously to leaders, governors and staff that pupils enjoy school and are happy. This ethos pervades the school. As a result, Quilters is a magical place where learning is fun. One parent spoke for many by saying: 'It's an amazing school with lots of wonderful ideas to encourage each and every child to want to learn and want to be a part of the Quilters family.'
- The school's welcoming and encouraging atmosphere gives pupils confidence. As a result, even the youngest pupils are appropriately self-assured. Pupils are polite and friendly. They were keen to speak with the inspectors about their work and their school.
- Pupils are encouraged to be kind and supportive to others, beyond their immediate friendship group. Pupils all have a 'heart partner', selected by staff on a termly basis. The headteacher summed up the purpose of this approach by saying: 'we want them to understand the joy of helping others.' Pupils are encouraged to check on the welfare of their heart partner from time to time, and to provide support for them if it is needed. For example, a pupil might notice that their heart partner appears to be lonely and encourage them to join in with a game.
- Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning. They enjoy learning about a wide range of subjects and are keen to know more. Pupils do their very best and value their own efforts and those of their classmates. They respond extremely well to the school's approach, valuing the capes that they wear and enjoying the antics of 'Wadeybear'.
- Leaders have ensured that close attention is paid to pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Staff are alert to signs and indicators that pupils might need

additional support in these areas. Action is taken promptly to support pupils when needs are identified. For example, the school employs counselling services to work with individual pupils, at the earliest possible stage, after a need has been identified.

- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They feel safe from bullying and they know that they should always tell an adult if they are worried about someone else's actions. Pupils have confidence that staff will help them if they are ever concerned.
- The school focuses well on helping pupils to be safe when using the internet. A range of measures have been put in place to provide parents with knowledge and understanding of e-safety. For example, a workshop for parents was held recently and was extremely well attended. The school has organised a further workshop, focusing on more technical aspects of e-safety, in response to parental requests.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They follow the school's rules extremely well, both in their classrooms and during less-structured parts of the school day. Lessons flow smoothly, and learning time is not disturbed by disruptive behaviour.
- Attendance is a strength and most pupils rarely miss a day at school. Overall rates of attendance are very high and have been well above the national average for several years.
- The proportion of pupils that are persistently absent is extremely small. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The school monitors pupils' absence very closely and takes firm, prompt action when necessary.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Throughout the school, and for all groups, pupils make substantial and sustained progress in English, mathematics and a wide range of other subjects from their individual starting points. As a result, they are prepared particularly well for the next stage of their education.
- The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in the Year 2 national assessments was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. This improved on the above-average results of the year before.
- Similarly, the proportion of Year 1 pupils that reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check was also above the national average in 2018. For the previous two years, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard was similar to the national average.
- Outcomes for the most able pupils are very strong. In 2018, the proportion of pupils that attained greater depth was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The work in pupils' books confirms that this group of pupils are making excellent progress, because expectations are very high, and because they are given challenges that encourage them to do their very best.

- The very small proportion of pupils in the school with SEND means that it would be inappropriate to provide detailed information about their outcomes for risk of identifying individuals. However, the school's assessment information and pupils' work demonstrate clearly that these pupils make very strong progress from their individual starting points, both academically and, in some cases, in terms of their social and emotional development.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similarly small. Each pupil is known particularly well as an individual. Staff take great care to ensure that they identify pupils' individual needs and that they put the right support in place to enable pupils to achieve well and attain highly.
- The work in pupils' books justifies the school's assessment information fully. Pupils' work in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects shows that they make very strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have found that continuing pupils' work books into the new academic year, rather than starting a fresh book in September, has helped to improve progress further. They say that this has given teachers and pupils an accurate baseline to start the new year from and avoids pupils 'slipping back' after the long summer holiday.
- Pupils enjoy reading and quickly develop an interest in and a love of books. Pupils' reading diaries show that they read at home regularly with an adult. Pupils use their excellent knowledge of phonics very well to read unfamiliar words. They develop strong comprehension skills, enabling them to understand fully the texts they read.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Leadership of the early years is highly effective. Leaders have an extremely accurate understanding of the school's many strengths and of what could still be improved. Leaders' expectations of the provision are exceptionally high, and this is reflected in the continual improvements in the early years.
- The quality of the early years environment is excellent, both indoors and outdoors. Staff think carefully about the spaces available to them and how best to use them. As a result, children are provided with welcoming and interesting spaces that encourage them to investigate and to learn.
- Tasks and activities are very well chosen to capture and maintain children's interest. Staff plan activities with specific learning intentions in mind, but also adapt and extend tasks according to children's responses.
- During the inspection, children were captivated by a 'crime scene' that had been set up in the early years outdoor area. They used what they had learned from a visitor to the school to help them to be 'crime scene investigators'. Children thought very carefully about the clues that they had been given and what this might tell them about who had committed the 'crime'.
- Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Every child has a 'to and fro' book to link their learning at school with their learning at home. Parents value this approach enormously. The 'to and fro' books show children's progress during their early years learning journey particularly clearly.

- Children's behaviour is excellent. They respond extremely well to the school's very high expectations, staff members' kindness and consistency, and the exciting and engaging learning opportunities they are given. At this early stage in the school year, the children in the early years know the school's rules and follow them fully.
- Staff ensure that children are kept safe. They look for opportunities to teach children to manage risks safely. For example, children are taught the rules about the safe use of the school's swimming pool before they start their swimming lessons.

## School details

Unique reference number	114884
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10052997

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Kew
Headteacher	Michael Wade
Telephone number	01277 624773
Website	<a href="http://www.quilters-inf.essex.sch.uk">www.quilters-inf.essex.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@quilters-inf.essex.sch.uk">admin@quilters-inf.essex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Quilters Federation in February 2018 and now works in partnership with Quilters Junior School, which is situated on the same site.
- The two schools share a headteacher, governing body and wider leadership arrangements. The junior school headteacher took over as headteacher of the infant school in September 2017.
- The school is also part of the Billericay Community Trust, a group of schools within the local area.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. Inspectors observed parts of 18 lessons, in most cases jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked closely at the work in pupils' books. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documents, including assessment information. They checked the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other documentation concerned with the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, governors, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection and with parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors considered 233 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 124 free-text comments.

## Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Russell Ayling

Ofsted Inspector

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