

Inspection of Chater Junior School

Addiscombe Road, Watford, Hertfordshire WD18 0WN

Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2013. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's high expectations and effective attendance systems ensure that pupils attend frequently. Many achieve 100% attendance. This strong focus on attendance directly supports the school's commitment to fostering high academic achievement for all pupils.

The curriculum and wider opportunities help pupils to live out the school's values of passion, collaboration, integrity and resilience. For example, they enjoy using the school's welcoming library or give their all in team competitions at cross-school events.

Behaviour is typically calm and respectful. Pupils are full of energy and joy during the improved lunchtimes. They unleash their creativity building dens and produce dance routines, as well as show their competitive side in games of hockey and table tennis. Pupils are grateful to the school and their parents and carers for making these changes possible.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and what to do if something goes wrong. For example, they know to block and report unkind behaviour online. They also learn how to identify trusted adults they can turn to if they feel worried. Pupils feel safe because they know their concerns are taken seriously by staff and acted upon quickly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has thoughtfully curated its curriculum around key themes. This ensures a clear progression of content from one year to the next. For example, Year 3 pupils explore how farms produce food. This is later built upon in Year 6 with a focus on sustainable farming practices.

A strong focus on reading has had a positive impact. Pupils enjoy the books their teachers read aloud. They eagerly recall recent favourites as well as those from previous years. For pupils joining in Year 3 who find reading a challenge, additional effective phonics support helps them to catch up. They are provided with books that match their reading level. This helps to boost both competence and confidence. Regular practice in key reading skills, like retrieving information from texts, enhances pupils' comprehension abilities.

The school has recently improved the writing programme. It now provides more structure, helping pupils learn grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary in steps. Pupils practise these skills in short exercises before applying them in longer pieces of writing. However, expectations for writing in other subjects are not high enough. Some pupils lack guidance to revisit key writing skills. As a result, mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and grammar hinder their ability to clearly express their knowledge. Their written work does not always align with their verbal understanding.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) through clear systems and targeted help. Recent staff training has made pupils' targets more specific and measurable. This ensures the support is adjusted to ensure pupils with SEND progress well from their various starting points. Parents value the

additional parents' evening. Here, they contribute to decisions about their child's extra support.

The school proactively promotes positive behaviour through rewards, support, and restorative practices. This leads to fewer incidents of poor behaviour and more responsible pupils. Clear behaviour expectations are reinforced with posters featuring simple illustrations. These help both pupils and staff to follow the rules and ensure more consistent conduct throughout the day.

Many aspects of the personal development programme are impressive. Leaders train teachers to present scenarios that help pupils discuss important topics like disability and race. This supports pupils' understanding of equality and equity, a key theme in the curriculum. There are opportunities for pupils to develop life skills, like basic first aid and money management. Additionally, extra-curricular activities have grown in response to the parent survey. New clubs include choir, computing, cricket and football. Pupils also have a range of educational trips. These include visits to places of worship and the theatre, that broaden their horizons.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school aims to identify challenges early, allowing time to consider necessary changes and the best strategies for implementing them. Governors fulfil their duties effectively, working with leaders to drive meaningful and lasting change. Staff value their involvement in these developments, recognising how it supports their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- High expectations for writing are not being consistently communicated. This leads to repeated mistakes and habits that limit the quality of pupils' written work across the curriculum. The school should ensure clear writing expectations are established and that staff use appropriate methods to support pupils with their spelling, punctuation and grammar in all subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	117158
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10336966
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anfaal Jaffer
Headteacher	Rajneet Khindey
Website	www.chaterjm.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher began their tenure in January 2024.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher for inclusion, four governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, and held discussions with some pupils about their learning. They also reviewed samples of pupils' work and listened to a selection of pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors also reviewed school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and reports from reviews of the school conducted by the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the surveys, including Ofsted's pupil survey, staff survey, and responses to Ofsted Parent View, which included free-text responses.

Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Hynes

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024