

Robert Kett Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121196
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380188
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2012
Lead inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	608
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julian Sturdy
Headteacher	Malcolm Gray
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2006
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Nick Butt	Additional inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional inspector
Lindsay Hall	Additional inspector
Rachel Hobson	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 34 lessons taught by 21 teachers; meetings were held informally with parents, carers and pupils, three members of the governing body, including the Chair, and a wide range of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including self-evaluation documents, strategic plans and other development plans. Inspectors scrutinised 334 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Robert Kett is much larger than the average-sized junior school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current government floor standard.

Since the last inspection there has been a further extension to the school with new office accommodation.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Robert Kett is a good school. Pupils consistently reach standards that are significantly above average in English and mathematics.
- From starting points that are generally above average pupils make good progress, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with disabilities. The contribution of teaching assistants to pupils' learning is considerable.
- Teaching is good. Some is outstanding and teachers have high expectations of the standard of work pupils should produce. While generally good, the quality of marking varies in showing pupils how to improve. At times there is an inconsistent approach to the quality of the presentation of work, including handwriting.
- The school collects a good range of data about pupils, but has not always been sufficiently systematic in its analysis to hold all staff fully accountable for pupils' progress. It has begun to adopt a more rigorous approach this year.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. The school has a friendly atmosphere and, despite its size, cares about each pupil as an individual. Almost all parents and carers and pupils say that bullying is very rare and have every confidence that the school keeps pupils safe.
- The school's leadership and management are good. The headteacher makes himself readily available to parents and carers and pupils, and drives forward improvement well. A strong team of assistant headteachers and middle leaders monitor closely the quality of teaching and learning to bring about improvement.
- The curriculum engages pupils well and there are good links across subjects. Creative themes, such as 'Treasure Island', excite pupils and motivate them to tackle challenging work. Its contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a particular strength.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Refine the school's use of data to accelerate pupils' progress further in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - analysing data systematically each term to hold staff to account for pupils' progress
 - consolidating ways of ensuring the accuracy of data.

- Ensure all teaching is good or better by:
 - sharing the strongest practice
 - ensuring marking consistently shows pupils how to improve their work
 - ensuring all teachers have similarly high expectations of how pupils present their work, with a particular emphasis on improving handwriting.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and contribute confidently to class discussions. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed evaluating their performance of a song from the musical 'Oliver', which they had videoed. They were able to cite strengths and things they could do better (such as not becoming distracted by the camera). Pupils in Year 5 all donned white coats to become scientists as they investigated which type of soil would be best for worms. They took their roles very seriously and worked extremely well in teams to carry out their experiments.

The rate of progress is fastest in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is more consistently good or better. While progress is good overall, there is a little more variation in Years 3 and 4. Past issues with the accuracy of data have made it more difficult for staff to analyse how particular groups are performing, although professional development and greater moderation of pupils' work among staff are producing more reliable results. All groups of pupils achieve well, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, and reach much higher standards than their counterparts nationally. There are no significant gaps in pupils' performance. Standards in both English and mathematics have been significantly above average for the past three years. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make good progress because staff select the right interventions to support them. A skilled team of teaching assistants works closely with these pupils, and carefully assesses their progress, adapting provision to suit their needs.

Attainment in reading is significantly above average. Pupils benefit from a wide range of reading material suitable for their interests and level of understanding. Focused guided-reading sessions help pupils to develop more advanced skills working in small groups with an adult. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires justifiably said their children were making good progress in all subjects, a view supported by those parents and carers who spoke with inspectors.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Quality of teaching

Teachers use probing questioning to challenge pupils and extend their thinking. They encourage them to think aloud. This leads to lively debates that contribute well to pupils' moral development and their good progress. For example, Year 5 pupils considered in the context of Long John Silver whether it is possible for somebody to be 'all bad' or 'all good'. Pupils find lessons interesting because teachers make the planned curriculum relevant and tailor it to their needs. Their high expectations ensure that pupils build on previous learning securely. Teaching helps pupils to hone their skills in literacy and numeracy in dynamic ways. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils considered the amount of rope required for a pirate ship when multiplying and dividing.

Teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development through creative approaches that encourage pupils to collaborate and work in teams. In an outstanding literacy lesson, Year 4 pupils compiled posters of 'top tips for performing poetry' after viewing clips of well-known contemporary poets reciting their work. Pupils took turns to come up with ideas and politely listened and responded to one another. Pupils learn three modern languages and find out about the cultures of Spain, France and Germany as well as developing links with a village in Kenya. Their appreciation of a wide variety of art and music further enhances their cultural development.

There are some excellent examples of marking that show pupils how to improve and encourage them to evaluate their own and others' work; however this is not consistent across the school. Similarly, in some classes the presentation of pupils' work is of a high quality, with handwriting correctly and neatly formed; in others this is less evident. Parents and carers rightly value the good teaching their children receive, and the pupils themselves say they are taught well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning, and think behaviour is typically very good both in the classroom and around the school. This view is confirmed by parents and carers. Pupils who joined the school outside normal times said how welcome they were made to feel and how quickly they settled. Pupils are especially considerate towards one another and take their responsibilities, such as 'play buddies', very seriously. They report that bullying occurs very rarely and that the school deals with any problems effectively. They know the difference between bullying and playground disagreements. Almost all parents and carers agreed with them. The school has a calm atmosphere and pupils move around very sensibly, especially considering the large numbers involved. Their great enthusiasm for school is supported by attendance that is consistently above average. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping safe. The school council undertook a safety review of the playground and made recommendations about zoning an area for ball games and a quiet area, both of which have been implemented. Pupils say this has made them feel safer from accidents at playtimes. Pupils also have a very secure understanding of e-safety and other potential dangers, such as from straying near railways.

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Leadership and management

The headteacher and assistant headteachers have an ambitious and shared vision for the school that is supported by all members of staff, who are keen to develop their practice and improve the school further. The positive impact of leadership and management is evident in a greater proportion of good or better teaching. Targeted support and professional development has helped leaders reduce the occurrence of satisfactory teaching. The school has maintained high standards since its last inspection and been successful in helping targeted pupils to make accelerated progress, especially in reading and mathematics. Regular monitoring by all leaders and managers gives the school a good understanding of its strengths and areas to develop, and this is reflected in comprehensive, if somewhat lengthy, strategic plans. The governing body provides a strong strategic lead. Members of the governing body offer a wide range of expertise and have helped the school with financial matters and the recent building project. Governors take great interest in the school's performance and are developing their proficiency in analysing data. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and that all training is up-to-date. In view of its continued success, the school has a substantial capacity for further improvement.

The broad and balanced curriculum prepares pupils well for their next stage of education through giving many opportunities for them to develop their basic skills of literacy, numeracy and communication. The curriculum makes a positive contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example through offering an extensive programme of educational visits, including residential trips for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. These develop pupils' self-confidence and social skills, and introduce them to new experiences and challenges. The school's assemblies introduce themes that are explored at depth in class around relationships, such as 'saying sorry'. Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are at the heart of the school's work. All pupils are included whatever difficulties they may be facing. The school makes special provision for any pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to enable them to participate fully. It ensures no groups underachieve, and is improving its analysis of data to monitor more closely how pupils are progressing.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Kett Junior School, Wymondham, NR18 0LS

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and sharing your views with us, both in person and through filling in questionnaires. We agree with you that Robert Kett Junior is a good school. Here are some of its strengths.

- You reach significantly above average standards in English and mathematics every year.
- The teaching is good and interests and excites you.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you look after each other very well.
- You enjoy coming to school and your attendance is above average.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep safe, including when using computers.
- The school is led and managed well by the headteacher and his team.
- The curriculum provides you with a wide range of memorable experiences, such as the residential visits you enjoy.

There are always ways that a good school can improve, so we have asked leaders and managers to:

- make better use of information about how you are doing
- make sure comments in your exercise books show you how to improve your work
- make sure your work is neatly presented, with good handwriting.

You all can help by taking pride in your work and acting upon your teachers' comments about how to improve.

With best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Lead inspector

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