

Kings Hedges Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110775
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	378166
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Salmon
Headteacher	Jo Angel
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2007
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	6–7 December 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 23 lessons, observing 14 teachers. They held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and school improvement plans. Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 161 parents and carers, 113 pupils and 53 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the impact of action taken by the school to improve writing, particularly for boys?
- How effectively does teaching support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- How effectively does the school support the development of its pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable?

Information about the school

The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds in this well above average-sized school. The remainder are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and almost one-fifth speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Almost half of the pupils are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs are mostly associated with literacy and speech, language and communication difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.

The school manages 'So to Speak', which is pre-school provision with a focus on language delay for children aged from two to three years. The school's Nursery was separated from the school in July 2011 and has subsequently rejoined in a Federation. Both of these groups are inspected separately.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Kings Hedges Primary is a good and improving school. Decisive leadership from the headteacher, supported by a very effective team of senior and subject leaders, has driven improvement forward and developed some outstanding features. This is because they have high expectations of everyone, rigorously check performance and target support sharply to bring about improvements in teaching and the progress of individuals. Through exemplary care, guidance and support, a considerable proportion of high quality teaching, and their own determination to succeed, pupils make good progress and attainment is average by the end of Year 6 and rising.

Teaching throughout the school is sharply focused in English and mathematics on the next steps in learning for all pupils. In many lessons, confident and demanding teaching coupled with interesting activities engages the pupils and drives forward learning rapidly. Boys' writing is improving by developing their skills in contexts they find engaging. The school is also working with success to encourage more reluctant readers to develop a love for books. This sharp focus on developing basic skills has been instrumental in the continuing rise in attainment in English and mathematics. The development of research and investigation is inconsistent as is the pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning across subjects. This also includes Reception, where occasionally children have too few opportunities to work independently of adults and initiate their own activities, and links are not made consistently between learning inside and out.

Very careful account is taken of individual needs. By knowing pupils as individuals the school sharply pinpoints support to meet their needs, particularly for the pupils whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable. Skilled and focused support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for pupils new to speaking English enables them to participate fully in lessons and to make similar progress as others in their classes. The pupils' behaviour is outstanding and a reflection of the consistent approach of teachers to developing consideration and respect for others. Pupils get on well together, irrespective of their backgrounds. Attendance is average and improving and pupils are punctual to school.

The headteacher has positioned the school at the heart of its community by forging outstanding, very productive partnerships with many outside organisations that enrich the pupils' lives and have a direct impact on their achievement. Members of the highly effective governing body fulfil their responsibilities in an exemplary manner, particularly in relation to safeguarding the pupils. As a result, pupils feel

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exceptionally safe, understand how to deal with risks and are confident that there is someone to confide in within their own 'safety circle'.

Rigorous monitoring of teaching gives senior leaders a clear view of each teacher's strengths from which to tailor actions to meet their individual professional needs. This includes working alongside or observing experts. Through accurate self-evaluation, senior leaders and members of the governing body have a clear picture of the school's qualities from which to plan action to tackle priorities. Given this and the success it has achieved in recent years in raising attainment in English and mathematics and improving attendance and the quality of teaching, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Broaden the pupils' learning experiences by:
 - providing greater breadth to the curriculum
 - enabling pupils to use their ICT skills to support learning across subjects
 - developing their skills of enquiry and research.
- Accelerate the children's learning and progress in Reception by:
 - improving provision and teaching
 - providing more opportunities for children to plan and develop their own lines of enquiry
 - planning activities that enable learning to flow freely between inside and out.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' very positive attitudes, their concentration on tasks and the sensible manner in which they work together, contribute significantly to their good learning. This was seen when Year 5 pupils developed ideas for a piece of persuasive writing. They settled quickly to the task set and worked productively in pairs to prepare questions for the trial of an alleged cattle rustler who was trying to claim innocence. Most pupils are highly motivated and generally want to produce their best work. They greatly enjoy sharing thoughts on their learning in discussion with others, but can become dependent on adult support and lose concentration on a few occasions when they spend too long listening to explanations of ideas they have mastered.

Year 6 test results are broadly average. They were slightly higher in mathematics in 2011 than in English, because several pupils did not reach the level in the writing test that their work during the year suggested. There have been no patterns to any variations in attainment by different groups, although boys have not been working at the same level as girls in writing. Assessment data and observations show that attainment is continuing to rise lower down the school from higher assessed levels at the end of Key Stage 1. More pupils are working at or exceeding expected levels for their age and meeting more challenging targets.

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Pupils are confident that their concerns about personal safety are dealt with very quickly. They are involved in a weekly assessment process which checks the safety of their learning environment. They undertake their responsibilities around the school with pride and are keen to raise funds for charity. Behaviour around the school is very orderly and pupils are very polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils understand how to eat healthily and apply this knowledge when choosing their meals. They enjoy sporting activities, although the school recognises there is scope to increase participation rates. Pupils value the diversity around them and show respect for each other.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are interesting and move learning forward at a good pace in calm and well-managed classrooms. Teachers question skilfully to check the pupils’ understanding and adapt their teaching in the light of their responses. The features of the best teaching were seen in an outstanding Year 3 mathematics lesson. Here a highly-skilled teacher made shape-sorting lively and hugely engaging by the imaginative methods adopted, the challenge provided and continually getting the pupils to check on their progress. As in many lessons, the interactive whiteboard was used very inventively and questioning regularly tested the pupils’ knowledge. Less effective teaching does not generate the same pace and challenge as seen here. Marking of their writing gives pupils very clear guidance on its quality and where improvements can be made, although this is less effective in mathematics.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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Daily sessions to develop number, spelling and reading skills are very effective and adapted carefully to meet the varying needs of pupils. Investigation and ICT are not always used effectively in all topics. The school provides memorable experiences for the pupils through 'Big Bang' sessions at the start of a new theme and focus days such as when 'Dinosaurs visited the school and left footprints across the field'. Additional programmes support the needs of different groups well, whether they have learning difficulties or need extending because of their particular talents, such as through links in science with a local private school. Physical education lessons are much enjoyed by pupils due to the enthusiasm and expertise of the sports coach.

The school's very sharp focus on early identification and intervention, such as through the 'So to Speak' provision, leads to positive outcomes and breeds confidence in the pupils. The school's multi-agency work is highly effective in providing additional expertise and guidance to support the learning and personal development of pupils and families facing more challenging circumstances. Examples include links with a wide range of agencies and local charities to provide play therapy and counselling support. Transition arrangements help pupils face new experiences confidently such as moving year group or transferring to secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's decisive leadership is based on a shared vision to break down barriers to learning for each pupil. In order to accomplish this, there is a relentless drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to the continued rise in attainment and increases in the rate of pupils' progress. Morale is high and teamwork strong at all levels. Teachers are very keen to share their skills and to learn from each other. Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are at the core of the school's values. The drive to improve boys' writing came from the forensic analysis of data and other evidence. This enables leaders to focus action when underachievement emerges or gaps appear in the performance of different groups.

The highly effective governing body makes a very significant contribution to the school's pursuit of further improvement. It keeps itself well-informed and able to challenge the school's performance in detail through robust monitoring systems, while supporting its development. The governing body rigorously fulfils its

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responsibilities for safeguarding by supporting the establishment of robust systems to protect pupils. Their impact is frequently monitored, reviewed and updated to reflect changing conditions and requirements.

Parents and carers are kept well-informed about activities and their children’s development. The school is increasingly successful at engaging with families who might otherwise be less confident in approaching staff. It provides parenting classes and points parents and carers towards activities that they might not otherwise be able to access. The school undertakes many activities to promote greater community cohesion. It makes a very strong contribution locally but has less impact nationally and abroad. Partnership working has enabled the school to tap into expertise not otherwise available. The programme with the university and business mentors for Year 6 pupils has helped to raise their aspirations.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close links with home, the federation with the Nursery and familiarisation visits before they start, help to smooth the children’s entry into Reception and provide continuity of experiences for them. They enter Reception with skills below those expected for their age. Recent data suggest that their progress has been variable and good at times, but not always consistent in each area of learning.

Teaching is satisfactory. The direct teaching of skills, while variable, has good features that move the children’s learning forward at pace. However, the strong emphasis placed on developing early literacy and numeracy skills has rather limited the focus on the children’s development in all areas of their learning. Occasionally, adult-led activities outweigh opportunities for the children to develop their own ideas

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and plan aspects of their learning. Adults are not always making the best use of the extensive outdoor space throughout the day to provide effective learning experiences that flow freely from those inside.

When given the opportunity, children collaborate well and respect the needs and wishes of others. They develop caring attitudes, accept that everyone has different needs and readily work together and help each other. Their behaviour is often exemplary. Children feel safe and secure because robust practices protect them and eliminate risks.

Adults in each class regularly assess the learning of each child and use this to plan sessions developing reading and number skills. Occasionally, information is not being used effectively to plan the next steps in each child’s development in other areas of learning. While leadership has a clear picture of some of the shortcomings in the two classes, it has not been sufficiently influential in securing improvements that bring consistently good and improving outcomes for all children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A much higher proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than in most primary schools. The level of satisfaction is very high in response to all of the questions. Inspection evidence endorses parents’ and carers’ very positive views about the school particularly over the quality of teaching, the progress their children make and how they are prepared for the future, the effectiveness of leadership, and the way in which their children are helped to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kings Hedges Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 161 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 425 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	102	63	54	34	3	2	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	107	66	51	32	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	85	53	66	41	8	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	98	61	58	36	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	106	66	51	32	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	89	55	61	38	7	4	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	47	79	49	6	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	61	38	88	55	7	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	84	52	69	43	7	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	83	52	68	42	7	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	68	42	73	45	12	7	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	84	52	69	43	4	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	102	63	54	34	4	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



8 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kings Hedges Primary School, Cambridge, CB4 2HU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Inspectors were particularly impressed by your confident answers to their questions. We found that Kings Hedges is a good and improving school. These are the things we liked most.

- The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body do their utmost to help you all to succeed, to take care of you and make sure you are kept safe.
- Your very positive attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour contribute significantly to making the school calm and happy.
- The school works exceptionally well in partnership with others to support your learning and has formed strong links with your parents and carers.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use assessment data to support your learning and help you to make good progress.
- You develop an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and know who to confide in within your 'safety circle'.
- Those of you who find learning difficult or are new to learning English are given excellent support so that you can make the same good progress as others in your classes.

We have asked the school to ensure that the children in Reception are given more opportunity to develop their own ideas across all areas of their learning. We have also asked the school to broaden your learning experiences so that you can develop skills of research and investigation and use your information and communication technology skills more effectively.

You can all play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale
Lead inspector

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