

# Kettlefields Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110771
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	356812
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Sheridan HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alastair France
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Carol Meek
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Stetchworth Road Dullingham, Newmarket CB8 9UH
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<b>Email address</b>	head@kettlefields.cambs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons taught by five teachers and one higher level teaching assistant. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement planning, policy documents, documents relating to safeguarding, reports prepared by the local authority and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the views of staff, pupils and parents through their responses in questionnaires. Inspectors received 50 questionnaires for parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of teaching on pupils' attainment
- the effectiveness of the school's strategies, including teaching, in promoting positive behaviour
- the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and the ability of leaders at all levels to promote school improvement
- the school's ability to engage effectively with parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average rural school serving, primarily, the area of Dullingham in Cambridgeshire. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. There are more boys than girls. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, with a very small proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has an acting deputy headteacher until a substantive appointment is made. The school houses an after school club that is managed privately and inspected separately. The school has received the Activemark award and has Healthy Schools status.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The concerns shared by a significant number of parents, staff and pupils are accurate when they say that this school has deteriorated since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment has fallen for several years and was low in 2009. Attainment improved slightly in 2010 but this improvement is unlikely to be maintained given the quality of teaching and learning observed by inspectors. Pupils are not being helped sufficiently to capitalise on the good start that they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In too many lessons, weak teaching and poor subject knowledge lead to pupils being insufficiently challenged and supported. In these lessons, pupils' behaviour deteriorates because they disengage from their learning and behaviour overall is inadequate. In other lessons where teaching is good, pupils display very positive attitudes and behaviour. In these lessons, pupils are well engaged and eager to do well. They are polite and supportive of each other.

Too often, teaching assistants and other adults helping in class do not get sufficient guidance for them to effectively support learning. As a consequence, adults spend too much time helping pupils to complete tasks rather than supporting them to think for themselves. This hinders pupils' progress.

The school continues to have success in several important areas. Sport and health have a high profile in the curriculum. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The school has been successful in encouraging pupils to do this through a range of physical activities, some of which are targeted at pupils who may otherwise be less inclined to exercise. Pupils play an important role in their school and wider community. There are many opportunities to hold positions of responsibility and pupils fulfil these roles enthusiastically. Many pupils represent the school in the local community at events connected to, for example, drama club and choir.

Leaders, including the governing body, acknowledge the issues that they face. They have lost the confidence of a number of parents and staff, who say that they do not feel listened to when they have concerns or ideas. The governing body has been overwhelmed by the strength of feeling expressed by parents. They recognise that they have not met their statutory duties and do not provide the school with sufficient challenge and support. Leaders have a limited understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of staff members. School improvement planning is ineffective because it is overly complex and not clearly focused. Leaders have introduced new strategies for managing behaviour but these have

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had limited success for two key reasons. Firstly, the strategies have not been adapted well enough to be appropriate to the age and maturity of all learners. Secondly, the strategies are focused on improving behaviour while the weak teaching that causes much of the low level disruption goes unchallenged.

A number of key leaders, including the acting deputy headteacher, are very new to their responsibilities. They are enthusiastic and express a cautious optimism, saying that they feel the school has turned a corner. However, these leaders do not fully understand the extent of their roles, particularly in relation to the leadership of literacy and numeracy. This inexperience, and the limited impact demonstrated by established leaders and the governing body, means the school's capacity to improve further is inadequate without considerable additional support.

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

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and support leads to pupils making consistently good progress by:
  - ensuring leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of all school staff and plan bespoke professional development
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge and expectations
  - providing opportunities for teachers to work alongside expert colleagues to share and promote good practice
  - providing teaching assistants and other adult helpers with training, regular guidance and support so they can effectively promote learning for groups and individuals.
- Increase the capacity of leaders by:
  - providing support and training for subject leaders and the acting deputy headteacher so they are able to demonstrate a capacity to fulfil their roles independently
  - developing the ability of leaders at all levels to contribute to school improvement
  - ensuring that senior leaders have the skills to engage the full range of stakeholders in the school improvement process
  - ensuring the governing body challenges and supports the school effectively and that all statutory duties are met.
- Improve behaviour by:
  - improving the quality of teaching
  - ensuring expectations of behaviour are well understood, consistent and continually reinforced by all staff
  - providing opportunities for pupils to be involved in the design of rewards and sanctions so they are meaningful to them.
- Regain the confidence of parents and staff by:
  - ensuring communication is regular, positive, honest and proportionate

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- ensuring that staff and parents are consulted about significant changes, so they have the opportunity to contribute to the vision and direction of the school
- ensure that feedback to parents and staff about their views includes proposed actions and the reasons for these.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**4**

Pupils' attainment is average and, from their relatively high starting points, this represents inadequate progress. In too many lessons, pupils make limited progress because the work they are given is not sufficiently challenging or engaging. In weak lessons, pupils can be heard stating that they are bored and disruptive behaviour becomes commonplace.

In contrast to this, there is some highly effective teaching. In these lessons, pupils demonstrate their ability much more readily. They are articulate, think deeply and show excitement in their learning. Most lessons have a high ratio of adult support from teaching assistants and parent volunteers. The effectiveness of this support varies considerably. Where additional adults are well briefed and trained, they provide effective support by encouraging pupils to think deeply with well placed, open-ended questions. Where guidance is less effective, support staff often spend considerable periods of time sitting passively or intensively supporting individuals to the extent that the pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn from their own experiences.

Pupils say that they feel fairly safe in school. Many say that they enjoy school and talk enthusiastically about the extra-curricular opportunities they have, such as the trip to France and the range of day trips planned to support their topic work. Pupils have a good understanding of what a healthy lifestyle is and can talk about the steps they take to stay healthy. They understand the importance of exercise and the dangers of substance abuse and 'stranger danger'. Pupils contribute well to their school community, with pupils throughout the school taking on roles and responsibilities such as school councillors, playground buddies and play leaders.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory rather than good because of the deterioration in pupils' behaviour when they are less engaged in learning. This sometimes translates itself into disrespectful behaviour and attitudes, for example, with lunchtime staff. However, the same pupils can be seen demonstrating real empathy, insight and enthusiasm when they are engaged appropriately and understand what is expected of them.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

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

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching varies considerably. It is inadequate overall because too many lessons lead to inadequate progress in learning. In weak lessons, teachers often demonstrate insecure subject knowledge. Pupils' work is not pitched at the right level so they quickly get bored and disengage. The pace of these lessons often slows as teachers try to manage pupils' deteriorating behaviour and engagement. Where teaching is good, it is brisk and well pitched so pupils are hooked on their learning; they are asked well placed questions that help them develop their own ideas and contribute well. These exciting lessons are planned carefully so activities are well matched to pupils' interests and abilities.

The curriculum is enriched with a range of activities, clubs and special events that pupils talk about enthusiastically. Sport is given a high profile, with many pupils taking part in a range of activities such as tri-golf, fencing and water aerobics, as well as more traditional sports. Where teaching is effective, the curriculum to support pupils' development of basic skills is sound, with opportunities to practise and refine skills being planned appropriately. However, in some lessons, opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and personal skills are not fully developed and too many activities lack any real purpose.

Pupils are well cared for. Pupils say they like their teachers and know that they can go and ask for help or support. The school's strategies for promoting positive behaviour have had a limited impact because they have not been sufficiently adapted to needs and maturity

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levels of all pupils. Where inappropriate behaviour is related to the quality of teaching, current management strategies have little long-term impact. That said, some parents and midday supervisors report that behaviour at lunch times has improved at this early point in the new school year.

Support for potentially vulnerable pupils is good. The school works well with a range of partners to ensure that pupils with particular needs get the additional help they need.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership continues to struggle through a crisis of confidence. Significant problems have existed over a number of years that have led to some staff and parents losing faith in the ability of the current leadership. Communication at times has been weak and this has further exacerbated the situation. Leaders, including the governing body, recognise this and some staff and parents report a feeling of 'a new beginning' this term. While leaders have had some success in reversing the downward trend in attainment and behaviour, these improvements remain very fragile, particularly when considered in light of the inadequate quality of teaching and the inexperience of new and temporary leaders. There remains considerable inequality across the school with significant numbers of pupils achieving less well than their peers.

Many members of the governing body are fairly new to their role, including the Chair of the Governing Body. The governing body is extremely eager to contribute to the success of the school but has been overwhelmed by the task at hand and the dissatisfaction that is being expressed through complaints to them. Consequently, they are not fulfilling their statutory duties effectively, nor are they providing sufficient challenge and support to the school.

Safeguarding is satisfactory with appropriate risk assessments, policy documents and staff training in place. Potentially vulnerable pupils are well cared for, with comprehensive risk assessments for pupils who may present additional safeguarding issues.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting community cohesion and understands its context well. Pupils get on well with each other and participate in activities within the local community. Charity work and humanities topics give pupils a sound appreciation of other cultures. Last year, the school introduced a European trip which gave pupils a wider cultural experience. The school has good plans in place to introduce opportunities for pupils to engage with people of different backgrounds from their own from within the United Kingdom.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills higher than those typically found. They quickly learn routines and behaviours because of the strong adult guidance and the well thought out activities they engage in.

Children clearly enjoy their learning in this part of the school and take part in activities with enthusiasm and a concentration beyond their years. Considering that, at the time of the inspection, these children had been in school for a very short period of time, their willingness to follow instructions and try hard demonstrates a real desire to learn. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has been in post for a very short time and is already bringing about improvements. School systems, for example, for behaviour, have been modified so that they make a very positive contribution to the support they give to children. Many quick fixes have already been put in place to improve opportunities for pupils and well thought out action plans exist to make further improvements to this already good provision.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	2

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Stage	
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## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaires from 50 parents or carers. Inspectors also considered the views expressed by several parents who had made official complaints to Ofsted. Responses from parents were significantly more negative than those typically seen. This was particularly the case in relation to the quality of leadership, the standard of behaviour, the extent to which the school takes parents' concerns seriously, pupils' progress and the school's ability to meet children's particular needs. Some parents were very positive about the school and expressed feelings of frustration at the negativity being shown by others.

Generally, the responses show the lack of faith many parents have in the school. The inspection findings suggest that many of the concerns parents hold are justified.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kettlefields 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 109 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	38	23	46	7	14	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	13	26	27	54	5	10	4	8
My school informs me about my child's progress	10	20	29	58	8	16	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	26	19	38	14	28	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	17	34	24	48	7	14	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	18	30	60	9	18	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	18	34	68	4	8	2	4
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)	14	28	23	46	5	10	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	20	22	44	11	22	4	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	4	14	28	14	28	17	34
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	10	19	38	11	22	9	18
The school is led and managed effectively	5	10	12	24	14	28	14	28
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	22	20	40	13	26	2	4

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Kettlefields Primary School, Newmarket, CB8 9UH**

You may remember that we recently came to inspect your school. This letter is to explain what we found out.

Your school is not doing as well as it needs to. Because of this, the school has been placed in 'special measures'. This means that your school will get help to improve so that you all get the education you deserve. An Ofsted inspector will visit your school every term until it is performing well enough, and write a letter for your parents so that they know how much progress the school is making. I hope this will help them to see how the school is getting better.

The areas we have said your school needs to improve are the quality of teaching in some classes, the quality of leadership and the standards of your behaviour in some classes.

We have said that your school needs to:

- make sure you are all making good progress
- make sure your lessons are interesting and pitched at the right level so you do not lose interest
- give teachers the opportunity to learn from other teachers
- ask you about how the behaviour systems could work better in different parts of the school (some of you told us that the green and red cards did not really work for you)
- make sure your parents and teachers all get a chance to say what they think about your school and know that they are being listened to, even if the school cannot do everything that has been suggested.

All the staff and governors will need to work very hard to improve your school. You can help them by making sure your behaviour is as good as it can be.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan

Her Majesty's Inspector

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