

North Kidlington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123025
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359347
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Leake
Headteacher	Ann Battersby
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons or part lessons were visited and eight teachers observed. Inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, policies and procedures, particularly those concerning safeguarding, data showing the progress that pupils are making and evidence from the school's own monitoring as well as that of the School Improvement Partner. Questionnaires returned by 109 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by pupils in Years 3 to 6 and staff.

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

- The relative performance of boys and girls, as data from the national assessments in 2010 suggests that boys are doing better than girls.
- The provision for, and progress of, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as they appear to be making better progress than other pupils.
- The provision for, and progress of, the increasing numbers of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The provision for, and progress of, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to see whether it is good, as the school suggests, or satisfactory as possibly suggested by data.

Information about the school

The large majority of pupils at this average-sized primary school are White British. The remainder represent a wide range of heritages. An increasing proportion speak English as an additional language although this is still below average and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average at more than 25%. Most of these have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or moderate learning difficulties. A new privately run pre-school facility has just been completed on the school site. The organisation that runs this facility also runs before- and after-school clubs in school. These facilities did not form part of this inspection.

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

North Kidlington is a good school which has made considerable progress since its last inspection, when it was judged satisfactory. It has a number of outstanding features. Perhaps the most significant of these is the excellent care, guidance and support offered to each pupil. One of the key outcomes from this is that pupils feel extremely safe. They are exceptionally confident about approaching adults if they have a problem and are very good at supporting each other. The care provided is indicative of the excellent attention given to equality of opportunity. Every member of the school community is equally valued and differences are celebrated regularly. Extremely careful records are kept of the progress of all groups and these show that there are no significant differences in their performance. In particular, those with English as an additional language are very quickly assimilated into the school, due to the very well-adapted plans made for their learning, and they rapidly make the same progress as their classmates. The support also extends to families and has led to an outstanding partnership between the school and parents and carers, who are extremely supportive. A major part of this caring is that safeguarding procedures are also outstanding. The school goes well beyond requirements and all processes and procedures are very rigorous.

A further outstanding feature is the excellent contribution that pupils make to the school and local community. They willingly and effectively take on responsibilities in school and contribute to the local and wider community in a number of ways, getting involved in local tree planting or organising charity collections on their own initiative, for instance. This has arisen from the school's outstanding promotion of community cohesion. A very thorough audit has been carried out of needs and this was followed by a whole day's training, where staff and governors drew up a very effective action plan based on this audit. This has led to an excellent awareness of the local community and a very broad knowledge of the wider community in the United Kingdom, Europe and around the world.

Pupils' progress has improved significantly in the recent past and is now good. Progress is more rapid in reading than in writing or mathematics, though recent initiatives are starting to have an impact on accelerating progress and raising attainment in these two subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is extremely well organised and these pupils make good progress, in line with their classmates. The apparent difference between the performance of boys and girls noted in the 2010 data was due to the particular abilities of the boys and girls in these cohorts and is not a typical feature.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is much of the reason for the rapid progress made in recent years. She is very ably supported by her senior management team and an experienced and effective governing body. There is a strong sense of teamwork in the school; all staff who responded to the questionnaires said that they feel a

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part of the process of taking the school forward. Self-evaluation is based on rigorous monitoring and is accurate. Given these strengths in leadership and management and the progress that has been made, the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress in writing by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write from first-hand experiences
 - increasing the consistency with which pupils use and practise their writing skills in a range of subjects.
- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress in mathematics by:
 - putting in place a programme to improve their skills of rapid recall of number facts
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to talk about and develop their mathematical thinking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the school with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in some aspects of number work. During their time in the school, all groups of pupils make good progress so that, by Year 6, attainment is above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. In writing, a good start has been made at giving pupils more opportunities to base their writing on first-hand experiences and to practise their skills in other subjects, such as geography and history. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of these strategies. In mathematics, pupils' skills of rapid recall of number facts are weaker than other aspects of their learning and this is inhibiting faster progress. Nevertheless they are making good progress in developing their knowledge of mathematical concepts.

Learning in lessons is typified by interest and enjoyment. For example, the school has recently been involved in a Creative Partnership, where pupils in all classes were involved in working on major projects with visiting specialists. There was huge enthusiasm during the multimedia presentation of these projects. In lessons with younger children, when they had watched a DVD of Barnaby Bear visiting Mexico City, their interest was evident as they wrote about what they had seen.

Pupils are developing into sensible young people who are acutely aware of their place in society and their responsibilities towards it. They behave well and are considerate of each other, and incidences of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with well. They have a very good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, though do not always carry this forward into suitable dietary choices. The range of cultures represented in the school is appreciated by the pupils, who are keen to learn from each other. Despite the school's best efforts and an improving picture, attendance remains average as too many parents take their children on holiday during term time.

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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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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

¹ 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?

All teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory, with the very large majority good or better. There are very good relationships in lessons, which lead to pupils wanting to do well for their teachers. The good number of skilled teaching assistants provide high-quality support, particularly enabling those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same progress as their classmates. Lessons are typified by a range of different activities which engage the interest of pupils. Although teachers use paired and group discussions regularly, these are not always sufficiently focused. For example, in mathematics, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to talk about and discuss mathematical ideas to embed their learning.

Pupils' progress is monitored well and those who are in danger of falling behind are identified quickly. Successful initiatives are then put in place to help them to catch up and the effectiveness of these is checked regularly. Pupils have had targets in writing and mathematics for a few years so that they know what they need to learn next. However, only recently have these been really specific to each individual. Pupils are enthusiastic about these new targets and they are beginning to have a positive impact on their progress, although they are in the early stages of implementation.

The curriculum has been developed well and is beginning to provide a range of memorable experiences for pupils, for example the recently initiated Creative Partnership. There is a good range of extra-curricular experiences, including activities which encourage

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pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles well through games and sports. Pupils particularly enjoy the visitors into school and the trips out and these add well to their learning and educational experiences.

Every pupil and their circumstances are extremely well known to all adults and they work extremely hard to ensure that all, particularly those who might otherwise find it difficult, can enjoy all that the school has to offer. A very wide range of external agencies is used extremely well to provide additional support when necessary, for instance when the appropriate expertise is not available in school. The school has put in place a number of initiatives to improve attendance. For instance, action is taken promptly when a particular child's attendance is beginning to fall below targets. Attendance rates are beginning to improve, being significantly better this year, although still in the average band.

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?

There is a very strong sense of teamwork in the school between all staff and governors. This stems from the determination of the headteacher to drive improvement, which has been communicated very well so that the vision is shared. In this, the headteacher is very well supported by managers at all levels. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection due to rigorous monitoring and targeted training. ♦The governing body provides extremely good support and challenge and is able to do this through its very thorough monitoring which provides a very clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, some of the governing body's systems are not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all areas are covered. For instance, although many governors visit the school regularly, there is no formal system for them to report back on their evaluations.

Equality of opportunity has a high profile for both school managers and the governing body, and pupils are prepared extremely well to challenge stereotypical views, for example. Safeguarding procedures are extremely rigorous, with thorough risk assessments and regular training ensuring that all are aware of their responsibilities. There are comprehensive systems in place to ensure the identification and management of risk of harm to pupils.

A wide range of partnerships promote pupils' learning and well-being well. Apart from the expertise called on to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and behavioural difficulties, there are good links that support their learning. For instance,

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pupils enjoy a range of experiences in physical education through links with a local secondary school.

The school is an extremely cohesive community and a very clear knowledge of the local community has been built. For example, pupils are regularly involved in local projects such as litter picking. The need to prepare pupils to live and work in a multi-cultural society has also been addressed outstandingly well and the work on promoting community cohesion has been very effective in giving pupils a very good awareness of communities around the world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception class and join Year 1 with average attainment. They make particularly good progress in learning sounds and letters as the school has been using a comprehensive commercial programme to develop these skills for the last couple of years. This programme is particularly effective in giving these young children the required building blocks for success in their future reading and writing. ♦

Children enjoy their learning and have a wide range of creative opportunities which enable them to develop rapidly and positively. There are good relationships and parents and carers are welcomed as valued partners in their children's learning and well-being. Each child is accepted as unique and those who may have difficulties with aspects of learning are identified as early as possible so that appropriate intervention can be provided. Children feel safe and confident and treat each other with respect. They play and learn with sustained concentration, both independently and when collaborating with others. For example, a group of children cooperated well to build a railway system with a tunnel in the sand.

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The leader has focused on ensuring that assessment accurately targets learning needs that are then addressed in a creative and exciting curriculum, which is developed well both indoors and outdoors. There is considerable liaison with feeder settings and effective transition arrangements which prepare children well for starting school. At present there is no specific plan for future developments, though the leader has a good picture of what she wants to achieve.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a higher than usual response to the questionnaire for parents and carers and they were overwhelmingly positive. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the way the school keeps their children safe and with the quality of teaching. No particular concerns were raised, though a very small minority feel that they are not helped to support their children's learning. During the inspection, evidence was gained to suggest that the school has worked hard to involve parents and carers in this and that there is considerably more involvement than at the time of the last inspection. A number made very positive comments, such as 'Our child frequently tells us that he loves school' and 'The staff are incredibly supportive, both to my child and myself.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at North Kidlington 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 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	64	37	34	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	66	37	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	50	49	45	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	47	51	47	6	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	61	56	45	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	48	49	45	8	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	42	60	55	1	1	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)	43	39	60	55	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	38	64	59	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	45	49	45	3	3	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	40	55	50	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	72	66	32	29	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	60	37	34	6	6	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 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 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.

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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Kidlington Primary School, Kidlington OX5 2DA

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and hearing how much you enjoy school because of all the interesting and exciting things you do. I particularly enjoyed the presentation of your Creative Partnership work and seeing the film of the excellent models you made and the work you did around them. We are not surprised that you enjoy school so much as it is a good school and has improved a lot in the last three years.

We think the best things about your school are:

- You are making good progress because you are being taught well. You make particularly good progress in your reading.
- All adults look after you extremely well and you told us that you feel extremely safe. Part of the reason for this is that there are excellent plans to keep you safe and that all adults treat you all as equals.
- You make an excellent contribution to the smooth running of the school and to the wider community, for example by getting involved in local tree planting and raising money for charities. This is partly because your headteacher and teachers have an extremely good understanding of the community and wider world.
- The headteacher and your teachers work extremely closely with your parents so that they can be involved in helping you learn.

There are two things that we have asked your school to improve:

- To help you do even better in writing, we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to write about experiences you have had, as you did in the Creative Partnership, and to practise your writing skills in other subjects.
- Your progress in mathematics could be faster, because many of you cannot rapidly recall all your number facts. We have asked that you have more chances to discuss your work in mathematics to help you learn more thoroughly.

I am sure you will continue to work hard and help your teachers to help you make progress. Keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie

Lead inspector

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