

The Kingswood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115268
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	363831
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2011
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Savin
Headteacher	Luke Bulpett
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons taught by eight different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, and with staff and pupils. They looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, teachers' lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's documentation, which included records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to inspection questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and by 65 parents and carers were also considered.

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

- How rapidly and consistently do pupils make progress across the school, particularly in writing?
- How well do staff use assessment information to plan work which challenges all pupils to make good progress, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as gifted or talented?
- How effective is the middle management of the school and how successful is the governing body in setting a direction for the school?

Information about the school

The Kingswood Junior School is an average-sized school of its type. Pupils are predominantly White British. Other pupils come from a range of minority ethnic groups. Many of them speak English as an additional language, but few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most have specific learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or speech and language issues. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. Most pupils who join the school have attended the infant school which shares the same site. The headteacher joined the school in January 2011 and is the school's fourth headteacher within a three-year period.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. The pace of development is quickening. Pupils are making more consistent progress and standards are beginning to rise at Year 6. A sustained strength is the good provision for pupils' personal development and for their effective pastoral support. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is often exemplary. They feel safe and have confidence in adults. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoy participating in physical activities. Pupils' contribution to the school in undertaking daily tasks is good, although links with the local community are more limited. Attendance is above average.

Although improving, pupils' learning, progress and achievement in Years 3 to 6, following underperformance in writing last year, remains inconsistent across the year groups. Typically, progress has been most rapid in Year 6, supporting broadly average attainment. There is, however, further work to do to ensure that teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly for the more-able and gifted. Handwriting is a weakness across the school and this contributes to untidy presentation. Although good practice is not consistently embedded, teachers are now making better use of assessment. A whole-school tracking system has been introduced. However, individual targets, recently introduced, are not yet used effectively to promote better progress, nor does teachers' marking give sufficiently consistent guidance as to how pupils could improve their work, despite some good practice in a few classes.

The proportion of good teaching is increasing. However, planned activities are not always sufficiently challenging to support the accelerated progress necessary to raise attainment further. The school is reviewing the curriculum and this is already providing better opportunities for cross-curricular use of literacy and numeracy skills. Although sufficiently skilled to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively, staff do not have enough understanding of the learning needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has brought new energy to the school. Self-evaluation is incisive and a comprehensive three-year development plan is in place. Increasingly, all staff are held accountable for the impact of their work. The satisfactory governing body values the drive of the headteacher and is increasingly confident both in holding the school to account and in driving through change. The school's strength as a community, the good support of parents and carers and the effectiveness of its work to get assessment systems in place and to reduce underperformance, together with its vision for improvement, all indicate that the school has securely satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the pace and consistency of pupils' learning across the school by:
 - ensuring that staff have higher expectations of all pupils, and that teachers' planning provides greater challenge and extension, particularly for the more-able and gifted pupils
 - making more effective use of pupils' individual learning targets to promote more rapid learning
 - embedding recently introduced whole-school systems for tracking pupils' progress and for the systematic marking of pupils' work.
- Implement a systematic programme to ensure that, from the point of entry, pupils develop fluent and legible handwriting and that staff expectations of the quality of pupils' recorded work are significantly raised.
- Ensure that all staff have sufficient training to meet the learning needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, particularly those at a very early stage of learning English, and provide for them appropriately.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter Year 3 with broadly average knowledge and skills. However, while pupils' personal development outcomes are mostly good, the school's impact upon pupils' academic progress is less consistent. With limited tracking information available, pupils have, in most years, depended upon intensive input in Year 6 in order to reach the expected, broadly average levels.

With rigorous systems now in place, and the pace of progress improving, school leaders are keen to engage pupils more actively in their learning. This was evident in several lessons, including a successful Year 5 science lesson on the structure and function of leaves. Here pupils were using digital imaging to examine and capture striking close-up views of leaf structure. They later recorded their findings, using a publishing programme. Access to stimulating, good-quality resources and motivating activities ensured that pupils' interest was engaged. This led, in turn, to effective learning. Year 4 pupils were encouraged to develop their speaking skills in the practical component of an English lesson where they were considering the dynamics of confrontation when characters are faced with a dilemma. For example, based upon a Bible story, pupils successfully re-enacted the dilemmas faced by Moses, developed dialogue and later presented their scenes to the class. Year 3 pupils were creating mythical monsters within their current unit of work which aimed to inspire powerful writing, so effectively supporting the current focus on improving writing. Pupils' time spent in drawing eye-catching monsters proved helpful in attempting to achieve a similar impact in words. The teacher worked hard to stimulate their interest through modelling of arresting verbal images. All of these activities encouraged the development of pupils' speaking skills, giving them new confidence and competence in their ability to share information.

Teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make, mostly, good progress. This is because the next steps in learning are precisely identified and these pupils receive a significant amount of individual support. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities gain confidence and

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progress at a faster rate than that of most other pupils. However, some staff lack awareness of the particular needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who have little prior knowledge of the language when they join the school. When tasks are given, staff do not always ensure that these pupils understand what they are expected to do, nor do they always actively involve them during whole-class sessions. As a result, pupils sometimes disengage and progress is limited.

Pupils' personal development is good. They work well together when given the opportunity. The school council gives pupils some experience of the democratic process and they readily take up the responsibility. Pupils' social and moral development is ahead of their spiritual and cultural understanding. They show respect for each other and for staff and have good interpersonal skills. Average basic skills mean that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for future study and later life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Relationships between staff and pupils are good, although pupils are often rather passive learners. Although improved assessment practice is beginning to support more rapid learning, teaching does not always take learning forward quickly enough. Planned activities are not always sufficiently challenging for more-able pupils and the pace of learning is, often, too slow. However, new tracking systems are beginning to provide more information about pupils' progress, so enabling staff to set realistic and challenging targets

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for progress. Pupils' individual targets for learning are very recent and are not yet supporting improved progress. Although teachers' marking provides pupils with some guidance as to their next steps in learning, this good practice remains unevenly embedded.

The school has begun to review and restructure the curriculum to a thematic approach, having sought parents', carers' and pupils' views. The existing curriculum does not always make creative connections between subjects, nor does it consistently engage pupils' enthusiasm. Opportunities have been identified for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. The school is working to build links with its partner infant school. This is potentially an important alliance, given pupils' deficiencies in handwriting skills and the quality of written work. Pupils have good opportunities for sport and physical development. Information and communication technology is starting to enhance learning in other subjects. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is carefully planned. External partnerships contribute satisfactorily to extending pupils' learning. The curriculum satisfactorily meets the needs of most pupils, although enrichment activities to support gifted and talented pupils remain underdeveloped. Extra-curricular provision is good and well supported.

Staff are very responsive to pupils' needs. Transition arrangements are good in, for example, supporting older pupils identified as potentially vulnerable. The school works effectively with support agencies. Good practice, well managed by the coordinator of special educational needs, supports the health, social and behavioural needs of pupils in potentially challenging circumstances.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are giving momentum to the pace of school improvement. National initiatives are being taken up, particularly around assessment, and the school is working hard to improve its practice. The current leadership team, inspired by the vision of the recently appointed headteacher, is firmly committed to improving provision and outcomes, so that the positive personal development outcomes are more effectively balanced by pupils' academic attainment. Rigorous self-evaluation ensures that senior leaders and the governing body have a comprehensive three-year plan which accurately identifies the way forward. Much has been put in place already, but the school knows it has to build capacity in both senior and middle leadership and this is being addressed through training and support. Subject leadership is increasingly effective. Monitoring is mostly accurate and is challenging staff to be more effective. Effective systems have been implemented to track

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pupils' progress. Classroom practice is improving and an increasing proportion of teaching is at least good and beginning to have an impact upon pupils' learning.

The governing body is experienced and supportive. Members have become more effective in challenging school leaders. They provide a bridge between the school and its community and are increasingly involved in the life of the school. They work well with school leaders to ensure that links with parents and carers are effective. The governing body accurately recognises underperformance and are closely involved in developing the current three-year plan for improvement.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff are appropriately trained in child protection procedures. There is a high level of shared awareness between school staff and the governing body. Documentation relating to individual pupils is rigorously maintained and the headteacher has a specific programme for monitoring and upgrading all aspects of safety and security relating to the site and premises.

Discrimination is tackled effectively and the promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school's accurate analysis of its performance has ensured the progress of the most-able pupils and of those who speak English as an additional language is correctly recognised as a priority for improvement.

The governing body ensures that community cohesion is satisfactorily promoted. The school is a harmonious community and pupils get on well together. The school has developed some international links with France and Malta. There are, however, fewer planned opportunities for pupils to engage with diverse cultures and communities within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Views of parents and carers

Although the rate of return was relatively low, almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the survey are happy with the school and the care it provides for their children. The vast majority feel that the school engages well with parents and carers and that their children enjoy school. One said, 'When Kingswood children go on to secondary school, they are recognisable by their good manners, positive approach and excellent behaviour.' Inspection findings mostly support parents' and carers' positive views of the school. A small number of parents and carers feel that the school has a new sense of direction and is making more rapid progress. On the evidence seen, the inspection team largely concurs with these perceptions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Kingswood Junior 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	54	29	45	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	57	27	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	37	41	63	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	34	40	62	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	30	46	34	52	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	28	44	68	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	32	42	65	1	2	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)	24	37	37	57	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	40	37	57	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	35	40	62	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	40	37	57	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	49	32	49	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	42	38	58	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 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 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Kingswood Junior School, Basildon SS16 5DE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Many thanks also go to those of you who completed the Ofsted questionnaire. We enjoyed meeting you, hearing your views about the school and spending time in your lessons. We found that although yours is a satisfactory school at present, it is improving steadily. These are the things we liked best.

You have good attitudes to learning and are making better progress.

You feel very safe in school and you behave well.

You undertake various jobs and make a good contribution to the school, although links with the local community are not so strong.

Staff care for you and support you really well.

You understand the importance of eating healthily and staying fit.

Those of you who find learning difficult get good support.

The leadership of the school is determined to make things better.

To help you do better, we have asked the school to do the following things.

Ensure that you all - particularly those of you who learn quickly - make more rapid progress across the school and reach higher standards, through more effective use of individual learning targets and more rigorous marking which provides you with clear guidance for improving your work. We want your teachers to keep a close eye on the progress you are making.

Ensure that you develop much better handwriting and that the presentation of your work is of much higher quality.

Make sure that all staff understand what they need to do to increase the rate of progress of those of you who have had less opportunity to learn and speak English than most.

All of you can help by working hard and doing your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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