

Kingsmoor Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109507
Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	363752
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Walker

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Georgina Hurndall
Headteacher	John Meaney
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed seven teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school development plan, the tracking system to monitor pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and a sample of pupils' work. They also analysed questionnaires completed by staff and 131 parents and carers.

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

- The progress being made by all groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of teaching in engaging pupils so that they make at least good progress in lessons.
- The effectiveness of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage in supporting the development of the younger children.
- The effectiveness of the new senior leadership team in monitoring, evaluating and improving performance in the school.

Information about the school

The school is smaller in size than the average primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds although a very small number are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

Pupils are taught in two mixed-aged classes in Year 1 and 2 and three mixed-aged classes in Years 3 and 4. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through the Nursery and Reception classes. The school took over the responsibility for running the nursery group of Little Learners in April 2010 which now forms the nursery class. The new senior leadership team was formed in September 2010 due to a number of staffing changes in the school. The school is presently experiencing a decline in pupil numbers due to the demography in the local area. The school has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark, Eco and International Schools awards and holds National 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The headteacher provides clear leadership so that all the staff contribute to the good quality of education for the pupils. Parents and carers, teachers and the governing body greatly respect and share the headteacher's focused approach to promoting extremely high standards of behaviour, enjoyment in learning and exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support. One parent wrote: 'I have always been extremely pleased with the school and the progress of our children. It is very effectively led by the headteacher and he is well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants.

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting points and standards are above average by the time they leave the school. The positive atmosphere in the classrooms, the additional support for pupils who find work difficult and the emphasis on key skills, are all contributing to pupils' good progress. The systems of tracking pupils' progress are well embedded so that any pupils who are in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and provided with additional support. The school has been particularly successful in accelerating the progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 in writing and mathematics.

The excellent quality of care, guidance and support greatly promotes pupils' good and often outstanding personal development and ensures that each pupil is treated as an important individual. Pupils feel very safe in the school and have an excellent understanding of issues relating to safety. The behaviour of the majority of pupils is excellent and this contributes to a very positive ethos for learning. Pupils are respectful towards each other so that everyone feels valued in the family atmosphere of this small school. They make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community by volunteering to take responsibility in school, raising money for charities and making a very valuable contribution to the local community.

The great majority of teaching enables pupils to make good progress and learn well. It is effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and actively engaged in lessons.

The curriculum is good and the school uses a range of opportunities such as theme days, visitors and trips to enhance pupils' educational experience. It makes excellent provision for music and drama which supports regular productions and participation by most pupils. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory but it is not fully structured to support the learning of the younger children. There are insufficient opportunities for children in the Reception class to develop their early writing and number skills. Child-initiated learning is not sufficiently purposeful or appropriately supported by adult intervention to maximise children's learning.

The school runs very smoothly because the headteacher is highly effective in motivating teachers and support staff to work as a strong team. The senior leadership team and

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governing body are well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. The newly formed senior team is developing well and leaders are supporting the headteacher effectively. The school acknowledges that there is now a need to review the arrangements for the leadership of teaching and learning as much of the responsibility for monitoring has traditionally been undertaken by the headteacher. Key stage coordinators are not fully involved in the monitoring of teaching and pupils' work. The school development plan has clear action points but it is not sufficiently linked to pupils' progress and learning outcomes. School leaders have developed an action plan for promoting community cohesion but this has not been fully implemented.

There are very positive relationships with parents and carers who speak very highly of the work of the school. They receive regular information about school events and the progress of their children. The effective leadership of the school, the accurate self-evaluation, the rigorous systems for tracking pupils' progress and pupils' consistently good achievement and personal development, indicate that this school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review the arrangements for the leadership of teaching and learning so that:
 - key stage coordinators are fully involved in monitoring teaching and the work of pupils
 - the school development plan is more closely linked to pupils' progress and learning outcomes
 - school leaders implement the agreed plans for extending the promotion of community cohesion.
- Develop the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - there are higher expectations and more opportunities for children to develop early writing and number skills
 - learning through child-initiated activities is more focused and purposeful and supported by appropriate adult intervention.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' current work shows that the majority are making good progress and achieving well. Most pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in their lessons. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were fully engaged in their work in literacy and made good progress when the teacher organised imaginative group tasks to develop their skills in writing instructions for practical activities. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has been particularly successful in improving the standards of lower attaining pupils in Year 3 through focused work in ability groups in literacy and numeracy. The school is presently providing additional help in supporting girls in mathematics and raising expectations of boys in their writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in and out of classes by teaching assistants so that they make good progress, in line with others. Many are making particularly good progress in mathematics and reading because the individual

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tuition and extra support in classes helps them gain confidence in their work. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also make good progress.

Pupils are very proud to be part of the school and they develop into friendly and confident young people. Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles, as acknowledged by the school having National Healthy Schools status. Pupils raise money for a child in Ethiopia and regularly sing at local residential homes. The school council is active in supporting improvements such as purchasing equipment for the playground and working on environmental projects, as recognised by the Eco Award. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good, although the school acknowledges that more could be done to raise their awareness of the multicultural diversity of society. Pupils' basic skills and ability to work with others are developing well. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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	2
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	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	2
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?

The large majority of teaching is good. Classrooms are attractive learning areas with good examples of pupils' work on display. Pupils' excellent behaviour makes a strong contribution to effective learning. In the best lessons, teachers plan a range of interesting activities and have high expectations of the pupils. They also mark the work regularly and show pupils exactly what they have to do to improve their grades. As a result, pupils

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display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. Teachers are, in the main, using well information from the assessment of pupils' progress to inform the planning of lessons so that the activities meet the different learning needs of all pupils. In a few lessons, teachers do not use assessment information well enough to adapt work to meet all learners' needs. A number of teachers are particularly good at accelerating learning through skilful questioning and encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning.

The school places a high emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, which supports pupils' good progress. There are a number of integrated projects and theme days which are effective in making pupils aware of the links between the different subjects and bring learning to life. All pupils benefit from a comprehensive and regular programme of physical education which is acknowledged by the Activemark award. Pupils have the opportunity to learn French and play a number of musical instruments. A detailed programme of personal, health and social education greatly supports pupils' good personal development. Pupils have regular lessons in information and communication technology so that they are able to develop their computer skills. There are numerous visitors to the school including a theatre group, authors and representatives from the local community who provide additional experiences for the pupils. A number of visits, including those to St Albans Cathedral and Wadelow nature reserve, provide good enrichment for the curriculum. There is a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, which greatly enhance pupils' enjoyment and experience of school.

There are extremely effective arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and support. Pupils are well known as individuals and they told inspectors that there are always members of staff to talk to if they have a problem. There are outstanding systems of individual support for all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Excellent working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit pupils, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective programmes. There are rigorous procedures for monitoring students' attendance and following up absences. In other respects, the school is very effective in working with parents and carers so that they can fully support the development of their children. Excellent arrangements are in place to support a smooth transition to the local middle 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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong leadership which is supporting the above average standards in the school. The new deputy headteacher and senior leadership team are working with the headteacher to ensure that there is a clear agenda to raise standards further in all areas of the school's work. Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and are effective in their evaluating and monitoring roles. They have been particularly effective in securing a number of building improvements for the school. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. The school has undertaken detailed risk assessments for all activities and has a comprehensive record of all safeguarding procedures. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all which ensures that the school is fully inclusive in integrating pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds. The senior leadership team analyses in detail the performance of different groups and ensures that any gaps in attainment are narrowed through intervention support.

The school has a number of effective partnerships including the local network of schools and the School Sports Partnership which have a positive impact on the curriculum. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and works closely with a variety of groups in the town. The International Schools Award recognises the significant amount of fund-raising for charities and plans for developing national and international partnerships. Speakers from the Hindu and Muslim communities in Bedford are invited to assemblies to celebrate the different faiths and religious festivals. These features provide pupils with outstanding opportunities to contribute to the wider community even though the school has not as yet fully implemented its plan for community cohesion.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a sound start to their education because staff in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a secure and nurturing environment where children learn happily. They make overall satisfactory progress and children enter Year 1 with average skills and knowledge. A range of activities is having a positive impact on their personal development as well as fostering the acquisition of number and language skills. Children show curiosity and enthusiasm as they enjoy the different activities. They are making good progress in their reading and developing satisfactory speaking and listening skills. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to develop further their early writing and number skills particularly in the Reception class. Though adult-directed work is well managed, the school recognises that the use of child-initiated activities is not as effective; it is not sufficiently supported by appropriate adult intervention. The accommodation and outdoor areas are very spacious and well resourced so that there is scope for a wide range of activities and experiences. Staff keep records of children's skills and use this information to match the activities satisfactorily to the full range of learning needs. The new Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator is working well with the Nursery teacher and teaching assistants to ensure there are clear expectations of children's behaviour. Good procedures ensure a smooth transition to Year 1. There is regular liaison with parents and carers, who speak highly of the care and support the school provides for their 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 larger-than-average percentage of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Most were very positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Responses included a number of detailed comments emphasising the very good leadership of the headteacher and the caring approach of staff towards their children. A very small minority of respondents suggested the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found clear evidence that the school deals effectively with the very few pupils who display challenging behaviour. A few respondents suggested the school does not take into account suggestions and concerns from parents and carers. Inspectors found that there are regular meetings with staff and clear opportunities to contact members of the governing body which specifically encourage all parents and carers to raise concerns and suggest ways to improve the school further. Overall, the vast majority of parents' and carers' views reflect inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kingsmoor Lower 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 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	99	76	32	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	113	86	18	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	92	70	37	28	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	96	73	30	23	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	102	78	28	21	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	88	67	41	31	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	86	66	44	34	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)	83	63	40	31	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	93	71	35	26	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	56	45	34	5	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	68	52	52	40	10	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	98	75	33	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	102	78	29	22	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.



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kingsmoor Lower School, Flitwick, MK45 1EY

Thank you for making us so welcome and for sharing your views during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you during playtime and lunch. We were very impressed by the standard of your singing in the assembly and particularly enjoyed the rehearsals for the Year 4 production. Your school is a good one and your parents and carers are right to be very pleased with the good start you make in your education. There are many positive things about your school.

You enjoy school and make good progress in your lessons.

You are friendly, confident and exceptionally well behaved.

You have an excellent understanding of issues related to safety.

You make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community.

Your teachers plan interesting lessons for you.

The teachers and the support staff care greatly for you as individuals.

You have a very effective headteacher who is working well with the governing body.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governing body to do the following things to make the school even better.

Make sure that the senior teachers are regularly checking your progress and the quality of your learning in lessons.

Give you a greater understanding of the different people who live in our society.

Provide a clearer structure for the activities in the Nursery and Reception classes so that the younger children make a really good start at school.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoying the many good things in your school.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector

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