

King Athelstan Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102579
Local Authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	376742
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Joy Considine

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Mongredien
Headteacher	Emily Newton
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 September 2010
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 22 lessons taught by 12 teachers. They held meetings with staff, members of the governing body, the local authority adviser and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, pupils' assessment and tracking information, safeguarding information and minutes from governing body meetings. They also analysed 172 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- What is the quality of pupils' learning in English and mathematics across the school?
- How well does teaching meet the needs of all pupils?
- How well do pupils develop their personal skills?
- How effective is the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- How effective are school leaders in driving sustainable improvements?

Information about the school

This school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than usual. About two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic groups other than White British and over half the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. A higher number of pupils than usual leave or join the school part-way through the year. There is a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body. The school has recently entered into a collaborative partnership with a neighbouring primary school. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The Kingston Town Centre Children's Centre, located on the school site, will be inspected separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection and it now provides a good quality of education for pupils. One parent or carer wrote, 'I have seen so many positive changes in the last year which are commendable.' This is largely due to the dedicated leadership of the headteacher and the enthusiastic team of staff and governors. School leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and a clear view of what more needs to be done. They have had a relentless focus on raising attainment by improving the quality of teaching so that it is now good. Their track record of bringing about rapid improvement shows that they have good capacity for sustained improvement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to school. This good start is successfully built on so that, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is average, although it is higher in English than it is in mathematics. Throughout the school, all pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. This is because the school has rigorous systems in place to assess and track their achievement, and to put into place actions to support those pupils who are at risk of falling behind. However, there are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to work independently or apply their mathematical skills to practical problem-solving situations, and guidance on work to be completed in mathematics is not always sufficiently clear.

The quality of teaching varies but it is good overall. The curriculum is mostly well planned to provide a stimulating range of activities to meet the needs and interests of pupils. Most teachers' planning is thorough and learning activities are carefully chosen so that pupils learn skills sequentially. Occasionally, teachers plan too many different learning activities which are insufficiently focused and, sometimes, lessons proceed at too fast a pace. On these occasions pupils do not consolidate or develop their knowledge and understanding as well as they might. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, and take the opportunity to point their pupils towards the next steps in learning, and give them time to respond to the improvements suggested.

Pupils behave well throughout the school and they are enthusiastic learners. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their attendance which is now above average. In

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addition to developing good workplace habits such as cooperation, resilience and teamwork, their attainment in English and in mathematics prepares them well for the next stage of their learning. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is good. The school makes good use of partnerships such as those with agencies from the local authority to support their work with pupils, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.

The school does much to promote its place within the local community and has good partnerships with local organisations and schools. The governing body together with staff have created a cohesive learning community in which the contribution of all pupils, parents and carers is valued.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment across the school in mathematics by July 2012 to bring it into line with that of English by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in real-life situations
 - providing clearer guidance to pupils about how much they are expected to do in lessons
 - reducing the use of photocopied worksheets to give pupils more opportunities to work independently.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all good or better by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan more focused learning activities that will develop and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is suitably matched to the learning needs of all pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils join Year 1 with below average standards and make good progress thereafter. The good progress they make in English and mathematics was recognised by the Basic Skills Quality Mark, awarded to the school as a result of their successful efforts to raise attainment in these subjects. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in lessons because they receive targeted support, sometimes involving one-to-one tuition, to help them to overcome their difficulties. Staff use assessment information effectively in their planning to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve equally well. In most lessons, pupils are keen and enjoy responding to challenging questions posed by teachers. For example, in one lesson, pupils were grappling with a complex number problem and one pupil said, 'I love a challenge.' Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they make good progress throughout the year and much of their work is presented neatly and legibly in both English and mathematics, showing their positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils say they feel safe in school; they are thoughtful and considerate to each other

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and they show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities within the school. The school council proudly points to the improvement in the quality of school meals following its involvement in planning menus. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in the award of Healthy Schools status. They make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, they initiate collections for charities and recently raised funds to build a well for orphans in Malawi. Pupils are reflective, have a good understanding of right and wrong and they enjoy the opportunity they have to play and learn with those from backgrounds other than their own.

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	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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons teachers adopt imaginative methods and use resources which capture pupils’ interests and engage them in learning. Lessons are mainly well structured with clear learning intentions so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers challenge pupils by asking probing questions to explore their understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher asked pupils to identify the types of angles found in triangles to ensure that they understood the distinctive features of different types of triangles. In most lessons, the pace is suitably brisk and lively and teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to ask questions and to talk about what they have learned. However, occasionally, pupils do not have enough time to complete their work, sometimes due to the fast pace of the lesson and sometimes because teachers provide too many activities for pupils to do.

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

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This means that in some lessons pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

The curriculum is imaginatively planned and makes good use of the wealth of resources available locally to provide rich learning experiences for pupils. The school capitalises on partnerships such as those with the Kingston Schools Sports Partnership to improve the quality of learning and to increase the range of enrichment activities for pupils. There is specialist provision for teaching music, French and physical education. Within the broad and balanced curriculum, there are planned opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills when learning about other subjects and this is improving their fluency and use of language. However, in some mathematics lessons, teachers provide too many photocopied worksheets and this prevents pupils from recording their work independently. The wide range of visits to local places of interest to support the curriculum adds to pupils’ enjoyment. Following a residential visit to the Isle of Wight, one pupil wrote, ‘The Isle of Wight is my favourite place. It’s magic.’

Throughout the school, relationships between pupils and adults are warm and caring and this helps to create a positive atmosphere for learning. The good links with the adjacent children’s centre enable the school to access additional support and guidance for those pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. The good arrangements for child protection ensure that pupils are safe and the school can point to some good examples of where it has helped pupils to overcome some significant barriers to their learning. The school has successfully implemented actions to improve pupils’ attendance and this is now above average. There are good induction arrangements in place for pupils who join the school other than at the usual time, as well as for those moving to the next stage of their education. The breakfast club provides a welcoming start for pupils at the beginning of the day.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the senior leaders provide good leadership with the drive and ambition to improve further. They are enthusiastic, energetic and are focused relentlessly on further improvement. They have harnessed the strengths of the whole school team who have the necessary skills and experience and who share the vision for improvement. One parent or carer wrote, ‘The headteacher is amazing and works tirelessly in leading her team to ensure that all children’s needs are met.’ Senior leaders work in close partnership with staff from a neighbouring school to share

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expertise and to develop practices to improve the outcomes for pupils. This provides the school with a secure base for further sustainable development. Rigorous monitoring by senior leaders, and consultants from the local authority, has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The high quality information provided by senior leaders enables them to provide a good balance of challenge and support to the school. There are thorough procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work at the school and those who visit. Staff promote equality of opportunity effectively for all pupils across all aspects of the school’s work. Previous variations between the achievements of different groups have been addressed. The school also tackles discrimination effectively and, consequently, pupils from different backgrounds show respect for each other. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It capitalises on its good partnerships with parents and carers to provide enriching experiences such as story-telling, cookery and International Day to raise pupils’ awareness of the cultures and beliefs of those from other parts of the world. The school has plans in place to establish links with schools in more diverse parts of the United Kingdom.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

One parent or carer wrote, ‘Every day my son comes home with a big smile on his face, excited about what he has done and eager to share his experiences.’ This reflects the experience of most children in both the Nursery and the Reception classes. Children join the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy. Although their skills are still below those expected by the end

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of the Reception class, they make good progress. Children get on well together and are able to share and take turns. They listen to each other and adults and they respond appropriately. They behave well and show independence and a sense of wonder as they discover new things.

Staff have created a safe, secure and attractive environment in which children can learn and play indoors and outside. Adults are skilled in understanding the needs of young children and provide a wide range of exciting activities to interest and engage them. There is a thoughtful balance of those activities that are led by adults and those that are selected by children. This has led to children making good progress, particularly in their social skills which are above average at the end of the Reception year. Dedicated staff observe and record children’s learning accurately and use this information to plan activities to challenge children and inspire them to use their skills across a range of contexts. For example, some children were ‘cooking breakfast’ in the role-play area while staff asked questions and made comments to develop their vocabulary. Teaching is consistently good with all adults working closely together to promote children’s development and welfare.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Since joining the school in April, she has reviewed procedures and practices and introduced meticulous systems to assess children’s achievements and this has already led to improvements in the quality of provision. However, she knows that there is more to be done and has plans in place to raise children’s attainment so that they reach levels that are at least in line with those broadly expected for their age. Adults have high expectations, provide clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. There are good induction arrangements, including home visits by staff, and good relationships with parents and carers make an effective contribution to children’s learning and development.

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

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was higher than usual. Most parents and carers were very positive about the school and said that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. Most agreed that teaching was good and that their children are making enough progress. Most also felt that the school helped them to support their children’s learning.

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Although a few disagreed and indicated that the school did not deal well enough with unacceptable behaviour, the inspection team found that pupils behaved well in lessons and in and around the school.

A very small minority of parents and carers did not feel that the school was well led and managed. Inspectors found that the leadership team was strongly focused on raising standards and improving the overall quality of education for all pupils. Most parents and carers indicated that they are happy with their children's experience at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King Athelstan 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 172 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 295 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	65	58	34	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	107	62	61	35	3	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	75	44	78	45	12	7	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	44	73	42	12	7	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	82	48	78	45	6	3	4	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	89	52	72	42	7	4	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	83	48	74	43	8	5	3	2
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)	76	44	72	42	7	4	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	75	44	74	43	9	5	6	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	67	39	79	46	13	8	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	37	86	50	10	6	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	78	45	71	41	13	8	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	94	55	67	39	8	5	3	2

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of King Athelstan Primary School, Kingston upon Thames KT1 3AR

Thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you had to say about your school. You told us that you enjoy school and that adults care for you and make lessons interesting.

Your school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection and is now a good school. Your teachers and other adults care very much for you and they plan lessons that help you all to make good progress in English and mathematics. You have good attitudes to learning and your attendance is above average. You get on very well together and you enjoy learning about children from backgrounds different to your own. Although you make good progress in mathematics as well as English, some of you could be doing even better in mathematics. This is what we have asked your school leaders to do to further improve your school.

- Raise attainment in mathematics by providing you with more opportunities to use your mathematical knowledge in practical situations and to give you clearer guidance on how much work they expect you to do.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that even more lessons are good or better by making sure that the pace of lessons is not too fast and by planning learning activities that will enable you to develop your skills and understanding.

You can help your teachers to make your school even better by asking them how much work you are expected to do and by letting them know if the lesson is going too quickly. I am sure that you will do all you can to help your school to improve even further. I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Lead inspector

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