

# Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	121943
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380362
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	478
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Craig
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jamie Nairn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	St David's Road Kingsthorpe Northampton NN2 7QL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 714674
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380362



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Keith Sadler	Additional inspector
Sa'ad Khaldi	Additional inspector
Sonia Bosworth	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 28 lessons led by 19 different teachers or practitioners. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation. This included: the school's analysis of pupils' progress; teachers' lesson plans; the school improvement plan; leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires completed by 46 parents and carers, together with those from staff and from pupils in Key Stage 2, were analysed and their responses taken into account.

## Information about the school

This is a large school. Most pupils live in the immediate vicinity. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An above average number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has a designated special provision unit (DSP) which is for 24 pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. All of these pupils have statements of special educational needs. The school shares a site with the children's centre. This is managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. There is a breakfast and after-school club, which is not managed by the governing body. This is subject to separate inspection.

The school had a new headteacher from April 2011. The school has Healthy School status and has been awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- The school is not satisfactory because weaknesses in teaching and leadership, and the pupils’ underachievement, have not been tackled effectively since the previous inspection. Progress is too slow for all groups of pupils. Pupils’ skills in practical mathematics are weak. In English, too many pupils do not attain age-related expectations in reading and writing. Overall, pupils’ achievement is inadequate.
- Over time, teaching is inadequate because it has made too little impact on pupils’ learning and their progress. Even though there has been a recent improvement, weaknesses remain. Work is not sufficiently well matched to pupils’ needs, teachers’ expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and there are inconsistencies in marking.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Pupils feel safe in school. Overall good behaviour is hampered because pupils are too easily distracted and they do not concentrate for long enough. Attendance, although improving, is low.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Governance is weak. The governing body were unaware of systemic weaknesses in teaching and learning for too long. Their management of the school’s budget has severe shortcomings because significant reserves have been allowed to build up. The curriculum for mathematics is inadequate. The new headteacher’s leadership and management have already had a significant impact in arresting the school’s decline. In particular, he has raised the quality of teaching and instigated good quality procedures to manage the performance of staff. Apart from English and

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mathematics, the role of subject leaders is under-developed. The school's capacity to improve is inadequate. Despite the positive changes, it is too soon for these to have resulted in sustained improvement.

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

- By January 2013, raise the quality of teaching to be consistently good by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - strengthening teachers' planning so that in all lessons activities provide a match to the different abilities of pupils in each class
  - improve teachers' questioning skills to ensure that they consistently demand extended answers from pupils
  - make all teachers' marking as good as the best in the school by ensuring that good quality guidance is given for pupils' next steps in learning.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that in mathematics pupils' calculation and practical and investigational skills are improved
  - developing the curriculum for mathematics so that work becomes progressively more difficult as pupils move up the school
  - strengthening pupils' grammar and punctuation in their writing.
- By January 2013, raise levels of attendance to at least the national average.
- By September 2012, improve governance of the school by:
  - developing a wide-ranging monitoring of the school's provision, pupils' achievement and the school's leadership and management
  - devising and implementing a sustainable longer-term financial management plan to reduce surpluses to 8%.
- By January 2013, strengthen the leadership and management roles of subject leaders by providing training in their monitoring and evaluation role.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is inadequate for all groups of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 because progress is too slow as a result of too much weak teaching. This means that attainment at the end of Year 6 is exceptionally low in both English and mathematics. A few parents and carers expressed the view that their children were not making good enough progress; this was confirmed by inspection findings.

Children enter school with skills that are lower than expected. Progress is satisfactory

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overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but stronger in the Nursery where children achieve well. On entering Year 1, only a small minority of pupils attain the expected goals. In Key Stages 1 and 2 inspectors observed pupils making inadequate progress in English and mathematics because work was not sufficiently well matched to their learning needs. In mathematics, only half of the current Year 6 pupils are working at age-related expectations. This is because there is a history of severe under-achievement in mathematics. Across the school, many pupils show weaknesses in basic skills and lack confidence when tackling practical mathematical problems.

The new headteacher has instigated improvements in teaching and this has accelerated progress, particularly in English. Even so, pupils' limited grammar and punctuation skills restrict progress, particularly for boys. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is significantly below average and although reading skills have been recently accelerated, the number of pupils working at expected levels remains low. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils made good progress from their starting points in identifying the different sounds in words and they successfully sounded them out; however, this work was designed for pupils in Year 1. In Key Stage 2, even though achievement is strengthening because starting points are so low, too few pupils at the end of Year 6 attain expected levels. Under-achievement is particularly marked for more able pupils, with too few working at or above expected levels. Even the most-able Year 6 readers struggle to explain their reading preferences and to compare one author's themes with another.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in mainstream classes make similar progress to their peers. However, pupils in the DSP achieve well. Provision for them is of good quality and they make good progress. Good provision for pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English means that they quickly acquire sufficient speaking and listening skills for them to join in most lessons with their classmates.

### **Quality of teaching**

Over time teaching is inadequate because it has not promoted satisfactory or better achievement. Most parents and carers returning the questionnaires said that their children are taught well. During the inspection, many lessons were of good quality but this positive picture masks weaknesses. Scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's monitoring data shows that there has been too much unsatisfactory teaching in the recent past. The impact of the curriculum on the teaching of mathematics is poor. Activities are not planned well enough to meet the varying needs of pupils and work is not made progressively more difficult for pupils as they move up through the school. The curriculum for literacy has benefited from a thorough review and is now satisfactory and improving. The use of drama to strengthen writing, for example, is starting to show benefit.

Too often, teachers fail to take account of what pupils already know and can do, particularly in mathematics. The same work is given to all pupils and hence there is

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insufficient challenge for the more-able. In the recent past too much work was left unmarked. However, following a whole-school improvement initiative, marking in many classes is good. In some it is outstanding and in Year 6, for example, teachers invariably mark work thoroughly, provide excellent guidance and ask for pupils' responses to the teachers' comments. However, inconsistencies in marking do remain.

In the better lessons, teachers ensure that the pace of learning is brisk and this leads to pupils enjoying lessons and learning. Teachers often make good use of modern technology to enliven learning. Teachers generally ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriately supported. For example, staff provide well for pupils' social development by offering many opportunities for paired and group working. This was the case in a successful Year 6 literacy lesson when the pupils were checking each other's work in their study of 'The Lady of Shallot'. The teacher questioned pupils well and this helped them to extend their thinking and develop communication skills. It also enabled the teacher to determine the extent of their understanding. However, too often, questioning is shallow and undemanding.

Teaching in the DSP is good. Work is matched well to the pupils' learning needs because assessments systems are effective. Staff have high expectations of the pupils who make good progress towards their individual targets.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and parents and carers are almost unanimous in agreeing. Pupils have a good awareness of the different forms that bullying can take and say that any incidences of bullying of any kind, including physical and emotional bullying, are dealt with swiftly and successfully by adults. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out school, for example when using the internet and when visiting local shops or play areas. Behaviour is satisfactory and sometimes good, particularly when teaching is good. Pupils generally cooperate well together and usually respond quickly to their teachers' requests. However, in some lessons learning is hampered because pupils do not always remain on task after their teachers urge them to improve their concentration. These lapses are most frequently associated with lessons where teaching lacks challenge and pupils' engagement wanes.

Levels of attendance are low. The school now has good measures in place to strengthen attendance though the full impact of these is not yet realised. Pupils with social and emotional difficulties are managed well, and the good and wide-ranging programme of high quality support enables them to play a full part in lessons. Pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable are supported well and parents and carers are fulsome in their praise of the support they receive. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and are new to the school say that they are helped to settle and make friends quickly.

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## Leadership and management

Until recently, senior leaders have taken too little action to meet the development points relating to teaching and achievement identified in the previous inspection. Governance is inadequate because members of the governing body have been unaware of the school's many weaknesses. In addition, their management of the school's budget has severe shortcomings. The governing body has ensured that child protection and safeguarding regulations are met.

Even though the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, and suitably promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development, serious shortcomings in mathematics mean that it is inadequate overall. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated but the school is not successful in ensuring full equality of opportunity as many pupils do not achieve as well as they can.

The school has built an effective partnership with parents and carers. Many comment positively on the good relationship that exists between the school and the on-site children's centre and how well this provides for families. A number made positive comments about improvement in the school since the new headteacher started. The new headteacher has already made significant inroads into previous systemic weaknesses. For example, he has brought structure and rigour to the school's processes for checking provision and pupils' progress. Data from these are starting to be used well to introduce a series of well-conceived improvement projects. For example, newly instigated performance management procedures are used effectively to identify staff's development needs.

Since the previous inspection, other leaders have not demonstrated the capacity to drive and sustain sufficient improvement and too much responsibility for bringing about change has rested on the shoulders of the headteacher. Nevertheless, recent changes introduced by senior staff are beginning to lift the quality of teaching but have yet to secure the necessary rapid rates of progress for all groups of pupils in all subjects. Subject leaders for English and mathematics have a sound understanding of strengths and areas for development in their subjects, but their effectiveness as leaders has not secured essential improvements over time. Other subject leaders lack the skills and training to make a contribution to the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects.



## 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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School, Northampton, NN2 7QL**

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We know that there are many things that you like about your school. There are some good things about your school but we have judged that your school currently has lots of areas that it needs to improve. For this reason we have said it needs 'special measures', which means more inspectors will visit to check if the school is improving well enough.

The staff look after you well and you, and your parents and carers, say you feel safe in school. We found that your behaviour is satisfactory but some of you lose concentration in lessons when you are not being challenged. The teaching is not good enough for you to do as well as you should. Your progress over the last few years has been inadequate and many of you have some catching up to do. Inspectors have asked your teachers to make sure that they provide you with tasks that are matched to your needs and to make sure that you give longer answers to their questions. We have also asked them to improve your calculation skills and provide more practical mathematics work because many of you are not confident in doing this. In English, even though your learning is getting better, your grammar and punctuation need to be improved. We think that some of your teachers mark your work really well and give you good guidance, but this is not consistent.

You told us that you really like your new headteacher. We have found that he, along with the other senior staff, are already doing things to make your school better. The governors of your school do not come to visit often enough so they are not clear about what needs to improve. Also, they have not spent as much of the school's money as they could have and this means that you have not had the resources that you could have. Finally, we have asked the school to make sure that attendance improves. You can help by making sure that you attend school every day unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler  
Lead inspector

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