

Kingsthorne Primary School

Cranbourne Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 0BX

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching and learning have not been consistently good over time to make sure that all groups of pupils, especially those known to be eligible for free school meals, make equally good progress.
- Pupils do not use the skills they learn in English and mathematics when they write in different subjects, and marking does not remind them to do so.
- Attendance is still too low for a significant minority of pupils to learn well and make good progress.
- The roles of phase and subject leaders are not sharp enough to contribute fully to school improvement.
- Steps for success in the school development plan are not specific enough for progress towards them to be easily measured.
- Teachers sometimes keep pupils together for too long and pupils do not then have time to work on their own.
- Teaching assistants do not always use questions to make pupils think and improve.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher, supported by the governing body, has quickly and accurately identified the key priorities for improving standards.
- Staff share leaders' and governors' ambition for the school.
- The recent rapid improvement in teaching, learning and behaviour is a direct result of the actions the school leadership has taken.
- Pupils show good levels of care and respect for each other and the adults in the school. They enjoy school, feel safe, and are well cared for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also observed break and lunchtimes, and visited the breakfast club.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered through the online questionnaire (Parent View) and parent responses to school questionnaires. They also spoke informally with parents.
- A wide range of documents including samples of pupils' work, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation, behaviour logs and safeguarding records were examined.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Doris Bell	Additional Inspector
Michael Onyon	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and children from armed forces families, is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special education needs who are supported through school action is well above average, as is the proportion that are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has its own breakfast club.
- The school is in partnership with another school.
- The headteacher was appointed in May 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure consistently good teaching throughout the school by:
 - making sure that teachers use all teaching time effectively
 - moving pupils onto their tasks sooner and giving them more opportunities to work on their own and find things out for themselves.
- Speed up achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics by making sure that every opportunity is taken to promote literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, and ensuring that literacy and numeracy errors are corrected when marking work in all subjects.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - sharpening the roles of phase and subject leaders in understanding and promoting school improvement
 - making steps for success in the school development plan more specific so that they can be easily measuredworking more closely with parents and external agencies to improve attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Since 2011, the vast majority of pupils in Year 6 did not achieve the minimum results expected for pupils of their age. An insufficient number of pupils made the expected two levels of progress and too few pupils made more than expected progress in English and mathematics. Underachievement has been present in the school for some time but it is now being addressed through teachers' higher expectations and leaders' clear strategies for improvement. School information suggests that all groups of pupils are on track to at least achieve the progress they should.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age, and particularly low in communication. By the time pupils join Reception, they achieve results closer to that expected for their age but still perform below the national average. Recent improvements are helping to close this gap.
- In 2012, the vast majority of pupils in Year 1 did not reach the required standards for reading because they could not use letters and sounds well. This failure has now been addressed through improved teaching so that pupils are beginning to enjoy reading and work at the level expected for their age.
- The performance in English and mathematics of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium has lagged behind that of other pupils in the school for some time. This gap is now narrowing. School information suggests that, across the school but particularly in Year 6, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are currently half a term behind their peers.
- In the past, disabled pupils and those who have special education needs have not made the same progress as other pupils. However, school information suggests that they are beginning to make similar progress due to well-planned support from teachers and support staff, and useful targets that identify the small steps they need to take to do well.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires improvement because it has not been sufficiently good to ensure good progress for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers do not always use teaching time well because they sometimes keep the whole class together for too long and this means pupils do not have time to do enough work on their own or find things out for themselves.
- The school has a new marking policy but this is not yet applied consistently throughout the school, or in all subjects. Pupils are not given enough opportunities or encouragement to accurately use the skills they learn in English and mathematics when they write in different subjects. This slows down their progress.
- The balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage is improving but insufficient attention is given to using the outdoor area as an extension of the classroom.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to provide support in class for disabled pupils and those

who have special educational needs so that withdrawal from lessons is kept to a minimum. However, they do not always make use of probing questions that make pupils think and which move learning on rapidly.

- Teaching observed during the inspection was mostly good and none was inadequate because recent initiatives, led by the new headteacher, have rapidly improved the quality of teaching. This is resulting in better progress for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils and their parents appreciate the 'writing pathways' and 'maths ladders' that are helping pupils to progress in their basic skills. This good practice is recognised by the local authority and shared with other local schools.
- The best practice is being shared through training, teachers teaching together and observing one another. A local authority training programme is proving helpful in improving teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is below average. A significant minority of parents do not make sure that their children regularly attend school. The school continues to work closely with external agencies to help improve attendance. However, the persistent absence of a significant minority of pupils has a major impact on their lack of progress.
- Pupils of all ages are keen to learn. They show good levels of concentration but, where teaching is not well planned and interesting, they lose concentration and there is low-level disruption. Pupils work responsibly on those occasions when they are given the opportunity to work on their own.
- Nursery and Reception children learn to follow routines quickly and behave well. Their good progress arises out of the positive relationships they develop with adults and the stimulating environments in which they work and play.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that the school teaches them how to be safe. They are aware of the dangers linked to mobile phones and social-networking sites, and know what to do to avoid them.
- Pupils know that bullying is wrong and what to do should they experience it or know of any. They describe bullying accurately and understand the effect it can have on others. They appreciate the school's new approach to dealing with any kind of behaviour that disrupts learning.
- Pupils described the behaviour plans and anti-bullying plans now in place and feel that they are fair because they make pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour. Good behaviour is the expectation and this is rewarded by being made a role model. Pupils wear role-model badges with great pride, and understand how good behaviour contributes to good learning.
- Exclusions are now at a low level, reflecting the school's success in challenging poor behaviour. Parents, pupils and staff all spoke positively of the changes in the school.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school development plan accurately identifies priorities for improvement but it does not have specific and measurable targets against which progress towards the priorities can be checked.
 - The new headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are supported by the governing body and they have communicated a clear and consistent vision which is well received by staff. Phase and middle leaders are beginning to hold colleagues to account and they are benefiting from the support they receive from the partner school. Up till now, they have not played a sharp enough role in driving school improvement.
 - Teamwork is well established throughout the school, reflected in comments from staff such as, 'Since the new headteacher took over, we are all on the journey to becoming a good school.' Staff are keen to do their best for every pupil, for themselves, and senior leaders. Opportunities to team teach, mentor, lead and participate in training, and observe one another teach, are contributing to greater professional confidence and skills.
 - Recent improvements in teaching and achievement are the result of the rigorous management of teaching and support staff, who are being held to account for their performance.
 - There are memorable learning experiences for pupils through trips, visitors and practical approaches to learning.
 - Relationships with parents are good. The school is well supported at the 'inspire' workshops for parents aimed at making them familiar with teaching methods and subject content. The school has used creative ways to get parents to attend sessions.
 - The local authority provides effective support for the teaching of mathematics and English which has improved the quality of teaching in these subjects.
 - Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Child protection procedures are strong, and the good work with external agencies reflects the school's commitment to doing its best for every child.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors carry out their statutory duties. They provide clear vision and direction to the school, and support and challenge leaders to improve the school's effectiveness. Governors know and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching and learning, and they consider the effectiveness of strategies used to bring about improvement. Governors are well supported by the local authority and know the school's information about pupils' progress, checking achievement regularly. They are aware of the difference that teaching makes to the progress of different groups. They provide effective support for the headteacher and manage the headteacher's performance well. Governors understand that only good teaching should be rewarded by a rise in pay and with additional responsibility, and know what is being done to tackle any underperformance. They make good use of the pupil premium, can account for its use, and explain how it is contributing to raising the attainment of eligible pupils.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103368
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	400613

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	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Callaghan
Headteacher	Joanne Loach
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
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