

Kenton Primary School

Mamhead Road, Kenton, Exeter, EX6 8LX

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From the Reception Year onwards, pupils make good progress. Progress in reading is outstanding, that made in writing and mathematics is good.
- Pupils are well taught. Teachers are successful in ensuring that lessons are lively and interesting. Consequently, pupils try hard and want to be successful. Very well-trained teaching assistants play a very positive role in the promotion of good learning in class.
- The outstanding behaviour and attitudes of the pupils make a very significant contribution to the progress they make. Of particular note is the way even the youngest pupils are able to work independently and productively.
- Pupils report feeling very safe and secure in school. This is due both to the respect they show each other and to the robust safeguarding procedures put in place by staff and members of the governing body.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher has ensured that the school has developed well. School self-evaluation is very accurate and has underpinned successful actions to develop and improve teaching and learning. The staff and governors work as a cohesive team with a clear vision and determination to move the school towards excellence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some aspects of teaching in lessons and some aspects of marking are not yet promoting outstanding progress overall.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and the clarity of the way they write down workings in mathematics are not always as good as they should be.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half-a-day's notice and took place over two days.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and five members of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of evidence was reviewed including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and a range of the school's documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, of which six were joint observations with the headteacher, listened to a group of pupils read and made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- The inspector took into account 38 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rowena Onions, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much-smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for those eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority or those whose parents are in the services) is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The number at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British with a very small proportion coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The school does not use any alternative provision to support its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age group classes, with younger Year 1 pupils being taught with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Older Year 1 pupils are taught with Year 2 pupils. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 and Year 4 are taught together, as are Year 5 and Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the achievement of pupils from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the link between initial teaching in a lesson and the activities pupils are subsequently asked to undertake is clear enough to allow them to continue their learning at a good pace
 - telling pupils more precisely when marking their work, exactly where they could make improvements.
- Improve rates of progress in writing and mathematics by having consistently high expectations for:
 - the quality of pupils' handwriting
 - the clarity with which pupils write down the method they have used to obtain an answer in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children are given a good start to their education in the Reception Year and they progress well from starting points that, over the last three years, have been below those expected nationally. A focus on promoting the progress of boys is gradually showing results and the gap between the attainment of Reception-age boys and girls, although still evident, is closing.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6, whatever their backgrounds and ability, make outstanding progress in learning to read. The youngest pupils systematically learn to use phonics (the link between sounds and letters) to read new words. Over the last three years, standards have been above the national average by the end of Year 2. By Year 6, pupils read fluently for a wide range of purposes. They report they enjoy reading both at school and at home.
- A school focus on improving writing has gradually promoted higher standards. Pupils are learning to use grammatical structures to enhance their writing, for example when Year 4 pupils used their knowledge of main and subordinate clauses to enhance a description of a surfer surfing a giant wave to great effect. Standards in handwriting are, however, too variable. The school has identified the need to improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and work has already begun, but has not yet had time to have a full impact.
- The school has successfully raised standards in mathematics through an emphasis on pupils discussing their solutions and using a variety of methods to solve problems. Although pupils show themselves very capable of identifying and talking about their methods, there remains a reluctance amongst some to write down these workings. This reduces the teachers' ability to use marking to full effect to help these pupils improve the effectiveness and simplicity of their mathematical thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported both in class and through additional activities, and they make progress that is at least in line with that of their peers. The very small number of pupils that are eligible for additional government funding (pupil premium) make good progress in English and mathematics. The funds are well targeted to pay for additional teaching by teaching assistants to assist these pupils to do well. Currently, there is a small gap, in terms of their average point scores, between the standards attained by these pupils in both English and mathematics compared with others in the school of the same age. However, their current good progress means the gap is closing rapidly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lessons are of good quality and an increasing proportion are becoming outstanding. Teachers make them active and challenging so pupils' interest is engaged. Good use of the outdoors provides space and variety. For instance, when Year 1 pupils were asked to chalk a number line in the playground to use to 'jump' examples of subtraction, they gained good practical experience of what subtraction means.
- The highly developed skills of teaching assistants are used to support less-able pupils so that they learn successfully. Their skills are also on occasion used to promote the progress of the more able.
- Teachers use questioning well to deepen pupils' thinking and to ensure understanding. They are careful to check that pupils are on task and learning successfully. In the main, this ensures good progress in lessons. There are occasions, however, when the link between the main teaching part of a lesson and the activities pupils are asked to do subsequently is not tight enough. On these occasions, the pace of the lesson drops because either the teacher needs to spend time in additional explanations or pupils take too much time in getting started.
- In the main, teachers use their knowledge of the attainment of pupils well to plan lessons that successfully meet the needs of the mixture of ages and abilities represented in the classes. Expectations are generally high and care is taken to extend challenge as required. This was

evident, for example, when the Year 5/6 teacher took time to challenge more-able pupils to move from calculating the area of rectangular shapes to circles. There remains, however, a need for teachers to be more consistent in their expectation of the quality of pupils' handwriting and to ensure that pupils show their working in mathematics.

- A lot has been done over the recent past to improve the quality of marking. Pupils are now given good advice about how to improve their work, especially in English. Marking is, however, not yet as effective as it could be because, on occasion, pupils are given generalised comments, such as that they should have used more adjectives in a piece of writing, rather than showing them examples of places where these could have been used to enhance the text.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The pupils at this school are a delight, developing strong personal skills. This is a major strength of the school. The highly successful way pupils' behaviour is managed is evident in the way that only very limited intervention by adults is required. The school successfully supports a small number of pupils who have more difficulty in controlling their behaviour, , helping them to make improvements in their attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils behave very well in the playground and in class. They quickly learn to be self-managing and to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning. For example, children in the Reception Year very happily and responsibly got on with developing a tent pitched in the playground into a dark place in which to investigate the use of torches to give light. Although they enjoyed the attention of adults when it was available, they did not need this to create amicable and productive learning. This ability to work independently as well as collaboratively is notable throughout the school. Pupils are adamant that behaviour is always as excellent as it was seen to be during the inspection.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure. They report that bullying of any kind is extremely rare and that adults very effectively ensure that any potential bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively. A high level of trust exists between adults and pupils so that pupils know they have someone to turn to if they need to.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the above-average and rising rates of attendance of the vast majority. The school is proactive in promoting and acknowledging full attendance. Punctuality is also good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body consistently communicate high expectations and an ambition to see the school improve as rapidly as possible. All the issues raised in the previous inspection report have been dealt with very effectively. This, and further ongoing developments, shows that the school has good capacity to improve further.
- There is good monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching through the careful checking of pupils' progress and through observation of lessons. Leaders use performance management and training well to promote good teaching. Teachers' points for development are closely matched to the school's targets, as well as teachers' training needs. Teachers and other staff support each other very well and there is a culture of exchanging ideas and expertise, which is very helpful in improving the quality of teaching.
- The school's own, and the online, questionnaire show that parents and carers are very positive about the school. Care has been taken to ensure that they are fully informed and that their opinions are considered and valued.
- The curriculum is exciting and responds to pupils' needs and aspirations well. This ensures that pupils have equality of opportunity, and that there is no discrimination and supports the good progress they make. Good emphasis is given to the development of basic skills, including pupils'

ability to be articulate. Regular themed events capture the imagination, and promote the desire to apply learning to real life. The curriculum seamlessly includes events that ensure pupils develop personally as well as academically. For example, a whole-school focus on fair trade has had a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Finances, including the way pupil premium funding is spent, are carefully managed. This careful financial management and the persistent way in which additional funds have been sought by the headteacher and governors has enabled the school to considerably enhance provision, for example by the building of a new classroom for pupils in Reception and Year 1.
 - The local authority provides appropriate light-touch support for this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are very well informed about how well the school is doing and have a good understanding of school data and how this compares with other schools. They are enabled to hold the school to account because they very systematically monitor effectiveness through data and through regular visits to the school. Governors help decide how pupil premium funding is spent and keep a close check on the impact on pupils' progress. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and the way that this has been, and is being, improved. Governors are very well informed about systems for managing staff performance and about how this is linked to any pay rises that have been awarded. They are well trained and fully meet their statutory responsibilities, including those associated with the safeguarding of 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	113204
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	403197

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Brown
Headteacher	Amanda Somerwill
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
Telephone number	01626 890465
Fax number	01626 891065
Email address	admin@kenton-primary.devon.sch.uk

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