

Kingswood Primary School

Cayser Drive, Kingswood, Maidstone, ME17 3QF

Inspection dates 15–16 May 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils work hard and achieve well. They make good progress and, by Year 6, standards are above average and still rising in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children's good progress in Reception is built on very well in Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress is outstanding in reading in Key Stage 1. Standards are rising on entry to Key Stage 2.
- More able pupils do particularly well and their progress is excellent in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Nearly all teaching is good and some is outstanding. Lessons are planned very carefully and pupils respond well, showing interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- All leaders and managers do a good job. The headteacher's highly focused and caring approach ensures she provides very strong leadership.
- Pupils behave well. They are very well cared for and feel safe in school.
- Leaders, staff and governors are fully committed to further improving the quality of education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Tasks are occasionally too hard for lower attaining pupils. Role-play activities are insufficiently stimulating in Reception.
- Teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) when writing.
- In Key Stage 2, weaker spelling and handwriting limit the quality of writing for a few pupils.
- A small minority of pupils have too many absences and this affects their progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons, including two which were joint observations with senior leaders, and listened to some pupils read from Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teachers and a local authority representative.
- The inspector considered the 29 responses to the online Parent View survey and the few letters sent by parents and also held discussions with several parents.
- The inspector considered responses to the 24 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' observations of teaching.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingswood Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school, although the number of pupils on roll has increased considerably in recent years.
- Most pupils are White British. A few are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is Travellers of Gypsy/Roma heritage. Very few pupils are at early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is above average. Currently, there are no children from service families.
- The number of pupils who join the school other than at the normal time is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently match pupils' work in writing and mathematics to the needs of lower attaining pupils
 - ensuring that in guided reading Key Stage 2 pupils fully concentrate on their reading tasks when working independently
 - ensuring that staff in Reception provide more challenging role-play activities.
- Raise achievement in writing by:
 - improving pupils' spelling by ensuring teachers consistently enable pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics when writing
 - ensuring pupils' handwriting is consistently good in Key Stage 2 and that it is joined and neat.
- Improve attendance by working directly with those parents who keep their children off school without good reason.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are mainly at the levels expected for their age. They make good progress, with strengths in reading and phonics. However, indoor and outdoor role-play activities are not consistently challenging, which limits their creative development.
- Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. The increased focus on reading and learning phonics throughout the school in recent years is helping to raise reading standards. The results pupils achieved in the Year 1 phonics check were above the national average.
- Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is rising and is significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress in reading is outstanding. They develop their knowledge of phonics very well due to effective teaching. By Year 2, a large majority read fluently, very confidently and with good understanding. The pupils who were heard to read during the inspection consistently applied their knowledge of sounds and letters to read new words.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is generally good. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards are above average with evidence pointing to higher standards in reading and mathematics among current pupils in Years 3 to 5.
- Scrutiny of work, lesson observations and the school's data show that the current Year 6 pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points as the current Year 6 pupils entered Key Stage 2 with average attainment.
- By Year 6, pupils write competently in a range of subjects. Most spell well but a few middle and lower attaining pupils make too many spelling mistakes. Occasionally, pupils' handwriting is not joined up or as neat as it should be.
- The close attention given to developing pupils' mathematical calculation skills and their ability to apply these to verbal problems has a good impact on raising standards. More able pupils make very good progress throughout the school and their progress is excellent in Key Stage 2. In the current Years 5 and 6, over a half of all pupils are attaining the higher level in mathematics, including a small minority who are three years or more ahead.
- Well-focused, individual support provides good progress for new pupils who arrive during the year, sometimes with gaps in their knowledge and skills, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups, including those of Gypsy/Roma heritage. However, intermittent attendance limits the overall attainment of a few Gypsy/Roma Travellers.
- Those in receipt of pupil premium funding make good progress. In last year's Year 6 tests, these pupils were behind others in the school by about one year in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows these pupils in the current Year 6 are now achieving reading, writing and mathematics standards which are at least in line with others. As in 2012, Year 2 pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium are attaining standards in line with their peers.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching in all classes is a key factor in the progress pupils make. This is the view of most parents, who said they were very happy with the way their children are being taught.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff are quick to seize opportunities to develop children's communication, literacy, numeracy and personal skills. The school is improving the quality of outdoor learning but both indoor and outdoor role-play activities are insufficiently challenging.
- The stimulating curriculum is well structured and enables teachers to build pupils' basic skills securely in lessons and over time. Pupils' enthusiasm is fired by strong links between curriculum

topics and work in literacy and mathematics. For example, in a Year 2 writing lesson, reading activities were superbly matched to pupils' abilities as they researched animal facts before writing their own animal reports.

- There is consistency in the methods teachers use to make sure teaching is good. For example, they have been trained to implement effective systems for teaching phonics and guided reading in every class. Phonics is well taught in discrete sessions because activities are carefully matched to pupils' previous skills through well-considered ability setting across the school.
- Guided reading sessions are of excellent quality in Key Stage 1. Without exception all pupils, including those working independently, make rapid progress because of the way in which key reading skills, including application of phonics, are taught. In Key Stage 2, while all activities focus on improving reading skills, a few pupils find it difficult to sustain their focus on the task when reading independently.
- Mathematics is well taught. Teachers have high expectations and good subject knowledge and ability grouping arrangements enable teachers to pitch pupils' work to their ability levels. This is particularly effective for more able pupils in Years 3 to 5 where talented mathematicians are given excellent opportunities to work alongside older pupils.
- Outstanding specialist mathematics teaching for the older most able pupils is also a major factor in raising their attainment to very high levels. However, in a few instances, work is rather hard for lower attaining pupils in both writing and mathematics lessons. Occasionally, in Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers do not encourage pupils to apply their knowledge of phonics to help with their spelling, which prevents them making faster progress in writing.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work and target setting in English and mathematics has improved very well since the previous inspection. Pupils are now very clear about their targets, what aspects of their work are good and how they need to improve.
- Teaching assistants often provide good-quality support for pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- From the earliest days in the Early Years Foundation Stage children learn the rules of good behaviour quickly and choose activities sensibly and persevere with their tasks. This is built on well in Key Stages 1 and 2 where pupils are purposeful and work hard. However, very occasionally, pupils lose concentration in lessons when work is not fully matched to their needs.
- Pupils' good behaviour is an important reason for their good achievement and personal success. They show high levels of courtesy towards adults and one another and this helps to maintain very good relationships throughout the school. Later entrants are helped to quickly adjust and, along with their peers, thoroughly enjoy school.
- Pupils from diverse backgrounds get on extremely well together. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school gives pupils many opportunities to reflect on issues such as the nature and the richness of different cultures, for example Japanese culture and literature in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They show a very good awareness of different forms of bullying and are adamant it very rarely happens. They say that any incidents that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. The very large majority of parents and staff agree with this view.
- Pupils arrive punctually and there have been no exclusions in recent years. The majority of pupils attend regularly but attendance is below average, despite the school's stringent procedures for promoting good attendance. A small minority of pupils, including a few Travellers, have persistent absences which affects their progress.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by senior staff and governors, leads the school very well and has high expectations of all members of the school community.
- The rigorous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance by the headteacher, senior and middle leaders provides a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has led to a marked improvement in achievement and teaching, including for those pupils in Key Stage 2 receiving the pupil premium.
- Leaders are committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils. The careful analysis of the achievements of different groups, such as boys and girls, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, enables them to provide support to any pupils who are underachieving and ensure they catch up. Additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used well to support identified pupils in their personal development and achievement and to provide extra adult help in small groups.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning well and give teachers clear guidance on how to improve. Staff are keen to improve their practice. Leaders have helped them to do so through well-selected professional training and coaching. Consequently, there are very few weaknesses and the amount of outstanding teaching is increasing.
- The school has made good use of expertise from the local authority in the past to raise the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. The level of support has been reduced now that the school has made good improvements.
- The school has a good partnership with parents. Their comments to inspectors and responses to the on-line questionnaire were very positive. The vast majority acknowledge the importance of regular attendance but a few persist in keeping their children off school without good reason.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's effectiveness gained through meetings with senior leaders, observation of lessons and analysis of assessment data and pupils' work. Governors have a good overview of the school's systems to manage staff performance and set demanding targets for the headteacher. They ensure teachers' pay is linked to performance. Training for governors is comprehensive and matched well to the school's needs. Governors know exactly how pupil premium monies are spent and are able to judge the difference the provision is making to pupils' outcomes. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	118524
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	412148

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	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Cornish
Headteacher	Emma Hickling
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2010
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