

Kingsway Junior School

Briar Road, Garston, Watford, WD25 0JH

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Pupils' achievement is not good in all classes. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- School leaders have improved the quality of teaching but it remains inconsistent. Not all teachers take account of how well pupils are learning during lessons.
- Some tasks are not matched to the different abilities of pupils. This means that the work is too hard for some pupils but too easy for others.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved in recent months but low level disruption still occasionally occurs in lessons.
- The work of subject leaders is under-developed. They do not have a rapid enough impact on improving learning.
- School leaders' plans to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning are at an early stage, and have yet to have an impact.
- Governors have not always held leaders sufficiently to account and their understanding of the quality of teaching is patchy.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in some parts of the school is consistently good, and this is leading to strong progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive.
- The leadership of the new headteacher has led to significant improvements in a short period of time. The next steps towards further improvement are well planned.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils behave well around the school and feel safe.
- Pupils, especially those in Years 3 and 4, enjoy coming to school and are interested in the topics and themes that they are learning about.
- The governing body has worked effectively with the local authority to manage a period of considerable change.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 16 lessons. They also made short visits to lessons during which pupils' work was evaluated.
- Discussions were held with pupils, senior and subject leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school's own achievement data, attendance information and policies aimed at keeping pupils safe.
- The views of 28 parents and carers were analysed through the Parent View website.
- The views expressed by nine staff who returned a questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Christopher Moodie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

Full report

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.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- There are fewer pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than in most schools of this size.
- An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or with a parent serving in the armed forces.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2013. The school was led by an interim headteacher and a consultant headteacher during the autumn term of 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and so raise achievement by:
 - making better use of assessment within lessons to make sure that all pupils are making good progress
 - provide work, tasks and activities that match pupils' abilities from the start of each lesson.
- Improve leadership and management across the school by:
 - helping subject leaders, especially those leading English and mathematics, to bring about improvements more quickly and have a greater impact on learning
 - working more closely with parents and carers to raise achievement
 - making sure that governors hold school leaders fully to account and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Learning in lessons is variable. In some lessons, learning is too slow because pupils are either not clear about what they have to do, or they do not work quickly enough. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is to full classes. This means that some of the work is too hard for some pupils, but is too easy for others.
- Pupils in Year 3 and 6, and some of those in year 4, are learning at a faster rate than is expected in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils in Year 5 and some of Year 4 are learning at the expected rate in these subjects.
- Pupils enter the school with average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012, Year 6 left the school with standards that were average in all of these subjects.
- Standards in mathematics have risen this year and the current Year 6 are now working at a level which is a little above average. There are regular, well-structured opportunities for pupils across the school to explore mathematics in a practical way.
- Pupils' reading has improved this year, due to the introduction of regular reading lessons. These lessons are well organised and pupils enjoy reading together and discussing their books.
- Pupils' writing has improved. Pupils have begun to write in a range of subjects and this has helped to reinforce higher standards. In most classes pupils' handwriting is good and work is presented with pride.
- Those pupils that are eligible for the pupil premium make the same amount of progress as other pupils. There is no pattern of under-achievement in this group at the end of Year 6 in reading or mathematics. The standards of writing are a little lower in this group than for other pupils. In 2012 the gap was wider and pupils were almost four terms behind in mathematics and two terms behind in English.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because they are given appropriate work and good support in and out of lessons. They enjoy very positive relationships with teaching assistants, who work effectively on a one-to-one basis or with small groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in Year 5 and some of Year 4 is varied. Teachers do not check learning closely enough during lessons and this means that they miss opportunities to reinforce understanding or adopt a different approach depending on pupils' progress. Where teaching is not yet good, pupils' different abilities are not taken into account enough. Work in these lessons is not set at the right level and the rate of learning slows.
- Many pupils in Year 6 have made outstanding progress this year in order to catch up with where they should be in English and mathematics. The reason for the previous underachievement is because teaching has not been good enough in the past.
- Pupils joining the school in Year 3 are well taught. Teachers plan interesting work and are

enthusiastic about learning. As a result, pupils in Years 3 and 4 in particular thoroughly enjoy their lessons. This is typified by one pupil who said, 'I love maths – it's my favourite subject and it's always fun'.

- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers. They provide good support for all pupils, and in particular those who need additional help. Where they are most effective, they work flexibly with the class teacher so that no groups or individuals are falling behind.
- The effectiveness of questioning varies. Questioning in some lessons is too brief, whilst in others it goes on for too long and pupils lose interest. Where questioning is well used, pupils are given time to think and explain before moving to working on their own or in small groups.
- The quality of teachers' marking has improved recently. Pupils are increasingly provided with comments that clearly identify what they need to do in order to improve. Many pupils are now responding to this marking and using the guidance to strengthen their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- School leaders have recently developed a system for logging and dealing with poor behaviour. The information (records of incidents) that this system generates is not examined closely enough by school leaders. As a result, any trends or patterns that occur may be missed.
- The great majority of pupils currently behave well and feel safe in school. This has not been the case in the recent past, when lessons were frequently disrupted by poor behaviour. Behaviour requires improvement in order to secure fully the current improvements.
- Pupils enter the school promptly and lessons get off to a calm and well-ordered start. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance continues to be above average.
- Almost all pupils accept that behaviour has improved recently as a result of the revised behaviour policy, introduced by the new headteacher. A small number of older pupils expressed concerns that the new approach to behaviour is too strict. This view is not shared by the majority of pupils who have welcomed the changes. As one commented, 'The school is a much calmer and friendlier place now'.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View were positive about both behaviour and the way that the school deals with bullying. Pupils understand about keeping safe and are aware of the different types of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying, though rare, was generally dealt with well. Incidents of persistent name-calling have occurred and the school has records of how these have been addressed.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The picture of leadership across the school is mixed. The leadership of subject leaders is variable. It is not consistently having enough impact on learning and requires improvement. This is because the information that they gather about teaching does not lead to changes quickly enough.
- The new headteacher has provided good leadership and has made considerable improvements to teaching and behaviour in a short space of time. She has been well supported by a consultant headteacher who has worked with the school since September 2012.

- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the last full inspection in February 2012. Consultant leaders and advisers have been involved with the school and its teaching staff and have contributed to the recent upturn in achievement.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. They have made the improvement of teaching and behaviour priorities and in both areas have been successful in raising standards. There is a clear sense of purpose across the school and all staff who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the new leadership.
- Most parents are supportive of the school's leadership. The partnership between the school and parents is not yet strong enough, and more needs to be done to enable parents to become more involved in their children's learning and contribute to the ongoing improvement of all aspects of the school.
- The school's curriculum meets requirements and is supplemented by a rich range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. There are opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. Pupils are encouraged to think about each other and celebrate when others do well. As a result of the school's work in this area, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Equal opportunities are promoted by the school's leaders, and this helps to create a welcoming and orderly atmosphere. Any discrimination is challenged on the rare occasion that it arises.
- The school has systems to manage the performance of teachers through pay-related progression. The new headteacher is reviewing the effectiveness of the current arrangements with the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the last full inspection. It requires improvement because it has only recently begun to hold school leaders to account. Governors have been successful managing the changeover of leadership, and a period of time when staff turnover has been high. They have made good use of the local authority's support and have recruited an experienced governor.
 - Governors take effective steps to ensure that pupils are safe and that recruitment procedures are robust. The school fulfils its statutory responsibilities with regard to safeguarding pupils; all staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.
 - The governing body's awareness of the quality of teaching and achievement is improving but remains thin. Their involvement in holding teachers to account for their performance has been limited but is set to increase as a new policy is about to be implemented. Governors have not been clear what the school is doing to reward good teaching or tackle underperformance.
 - The governing body is committed to improving the school. Finances are well managed and resources are effectively deployed. The additional funding received through the pupil premium has been carefully allocated and its impact has been evaluated.

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	117168
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	399691

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Stephens
Headteacher	Jenny Sherry
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2012
Telephone number	01923 672583
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