

The Kingswood Junior School

Clay Hill Road, Basildon, SS16 5DE

Inspection dates 2–3 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- While pupils' progress and attainment are now rising, achievement over time has been, and in some year groups remains, too variable.
- Although the majority of teaching is now good, the better quality teaching has not been in place long enough to help all pupils make good progress.
- Adults do not always check on learning in lessons and miss opportunities to adjust activities to accelerate progress.
- The quality of teachers' marking is not consistently good across all classes and subjects.
- Pupils' targets are too complex and, as a result, they do not always know how to improve their work.
- Lesson planning does not focus effectively on what skills pupils will learn.
- Teaching assistants are not always used to best advantage in lessons.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has transformed many aspects of the school's work to reverse a legacy of considerable turbulence in the school's life.
- As a result, teaching has improved and pupils are beginning to achieve better outcomes.
- Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because of the high levels of support provided.
- A high priority is given to keeping pupils safe and promoting their wellbeing.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They greatly enjoy school, feel very safe there and work extremely well together to help their understanding. They are considerate of others, very polite and increasingly confident.
- Governors are totally committed to the school and to raising pupils' achievements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspector observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of which were joint observations with senior leaders. All classroom teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching, most twice.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and discussed with them their reading preferences and personal reading record.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work, scrutinised the school's tracking records of pupils' progress and took account of the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and other documents and policies.
- The views of parents and carers were sought during the two days and responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were examined.
- The views of staff were sought through a questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Cousins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gay Tattersall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are of White British heritage and fewer pupils than average are from minority ethnic groups. No pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action or school action plus is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Fewer pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals than in most schools. These pupils are supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take further steps to improve teaching and increase the proportion of pupils that make consistently good or better progress by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given clear steps to success that focus on what they are going to learn rather than what they are going to do
 - feedback in lessons focuses on specific skills or outcomes so that pupils know precisely what they need to do in the lesson to improve
 - marking accurately highlights the key errors in pupils' work, especially basic frequently used spellings
 - adults regularly check how well pupils are doing in lessons, and adjust activities in response to pupils' understanding so that their progress accelerates
 - more effective use is made of other adults in lessons so that pupils' learning benefits from the high levels of support available
 - pupils understand their targets and know what they have to do to meet them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils join the school with attainment that is broadly average and, in 2012, they left with similar levels. However, not enough pupils made better than expected progress and the rate of progress is inconsistent in certain year groups and over time. This means achievement requires improvement.
- Pupils' progress is now tracked more regularly at half-termly intervals, allowing leaders to intervene more quickly where the achievement of individuals or groups falters. A much sharper focus has been given to ensuring that pupils in Year 6 reach their targets. However, there remain inconsistencies in other year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good and well-managed programmes of out-of-class support for their progress. However, in class their progress varies along with their peers, depending on how well tasks have been adapted for them and how effective teaching assistants are in ensuring good support.
- Most pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve well in learning to read. Pupils enjoy a wide range of books and talk enthusiastically about the ones they like. While readers use appropriate skills to read unfamiliar words, the school's programme for teaching pupils the sounds letters make (phonics) has only been recently introduced and has not improved pupils' spelling skills fast enough.
- In this school year, attainment is on track to be higher than in previous years due to the effective strategies the school has introduced, such as the use of topic books to encourage pupils to produce pieces of high-quality writing. More pupils in Year 6 now reach above-average levels in English and most make at least the progress they should.
- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching, including raising teachers' expectations, have brought about better rates of progress for current pupils, especially in reading and writing.
- The gap in progress between boys and girls is closing, and girls now make similar progress to boys. In a Year 5 lesson, the use of an effective topic based on the poem, *The Highwayman*, and the enthusiasm of the teacher for exciting words and effective imagery, meant all pupils were totally absorbed in producing high quality writing.
- Pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium now benefit from extra adult support in lessons and additional resources. In most year groups and subjects, these pupils are making good progress. In Year 6 in 2012, pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium were over two terms behind other pupils in English and one term behind in mathematics. Current teacher assessments indicate that this gap is closing and this group of pupils attain as well as other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is rising as teachers respond to the higher expectations set by the headteacher. However, over time, too much teaching has shortcomings that affect pupils' progress and require improvement.
- Teachers and other adults know pupils well so that learning activities maintain interest

regardless of the broad ability ranges in classes. This focus ensures that relationships are good and learning is purposeful. However, adults do not always check that activities are challenging enough or correct misunderstandings. This reduces opportunities for them to accelerate learning and give specific feedback.

- Teaching assistants regularly work with groups in the classroom. Despite providing some good support for learning, they are not managed effectively by all teachers to make the most of their skills by working independently and supporting a wider range of pupils.
- Each lesson starts with sharing a learning objective so that pupils know the purpose of the lesson. However these are frequently about what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. As a result, pupils are not clear about the new skills they will acquire and are not sure how they will know when they have been successful in a lesson.
- The setting of targets to guide pupils in taking the next step and in setting new challenges is too variable across the school. Targets are generally set and checked regularly and, as a result, pupils' learning is accelerating. However, this is not the case in every class, and pupils say that some targets are too complex and this restricts their ability to check on their own learning.
- Teachers' marking is done promptly and offers encouragement but it is occasionally inaccurate in not correcting important spellings or simple grammatical errors. When good advice and guidance is given, these are not always followed up in subsequent work. Pupils are given opportunities to respond to their teacher's feedback but their remarks are sometimes too brief or careless to be worthwhile.
- The best teaching reflects a better understanding of the way different groups learn and this provides more challenging and faster-paced sessions. For example, a mathematics lesson on fractions used fast-paced discussions and skilful questioning well. All the adults used high levels of challenge, insisting that pupils said how they knew they were correct, and this cemented the learning from the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They understand and welcome the school's simple rules and the system of rewards and sanctions that back them up. They greatly appreciate the rewards, and say the sanctions are seldom needed beyond the level of an initial warning. Pupils are polite, sensible, friendly and cheerful.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy the wide range of activities in lessons. They are very proud of the new garden area that they have helped to create and plant. They talk sensitively about the two teachers and a pupil in whose memory it was created.
- Pupils stressed their enjoyment of the many out-of-school trips out they have, as well as how teachers make lessons enjoyable and interesting. They work hard in class, concentrate well and are keen to succeed. They show good levels of persistence and patience when they find an aspect of work difficult.
- Relationships are very good between boys and girls from different backgrounds. Pupils told the inspection team how teachers successfully help them to understand and learn about each other's cultures.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, particularly cyber-bullying, and

say that it very rarely happens in the school. They feel very safe in school and know how to contribute to their own safety. They have great confidence in the adults, especially the headteacher, to address any issues that arise quickly and fairly.

- A small minority of pupils who initially struggle to conform to the high standards of behaviour the school expects make good progress in their personal development. This is because of the outstanding support they receive from all staff and the good communication with families.
- School leaders have been effective in improving pupils' attendance to above-average levels. This includes the groups of pupils who might find school challenging or learning difficult.

The leadership and management are good

- After a period where pupils' achievement declined, the headteacher has provided a vital sense of purpose and direction to the school. He is well supported by a dedicated team of staff and a governing body that works hard to support and challenge the leadership. Leaders have successfully improved attendance, extended and enhanced the curriculum and considerably increased the amount of good teaching in the school. Currently, Year 6 pupils achieve well in English and school data shows their attainment is above average.
- Half-termly checks on progress with staff are beginning to ensure that pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly provided with extra help. This year, the pupil premium funding has been used more effectively than before so that the additional support these pupils receive results in their making better progress.
- Senior and, increasingly, subject leaders observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' work. They hold regular meetings with class teachers and provide them with appropriate guidance and training.
- Staff views expressed in the questionnaires and in discussions with the inspector show that morale is high and that the overwhelming majority of the staff team share in the ambitious vision of the headteacher and governors.
- The quality of teaching has improved recently due to robust checks. The links between teaching targets and pupil progress have begun to help to improve achievement. However, recently introduced opportunities to learn from the best practitioners within the school have not yet had a full impact on teaching.
- The school offers a broad range of subjects, and classrooms and corridors reflect this in terms of vibrant displays of pupils' work and ready access to new resources, such as tablet computers. The subjects pupils learn about are well planned, with imaginative links to visits and visitors, and are well designed to reflect pupils' interests and needs. For example, links to a school in New Zealand help to boost interest in French and contact with the local hospice allows pupils to reflect on their community.
- Over time, pupils learn more about other cultures, as well as to tolerate differences, than at the time of the last inspection. This promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well. Pupils take a lively interest in other cultures through their connections and contacts with schools across the world. They are very clear about what is right and wrong. In Year 6 lesson, a well-chosen video of the Apollo 11 moon landing was viewed in total silence and then pupils embarked on deep discussions to reflect on how such a significant historical event made them feel.

- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. With the effective support of the local authority, leaders have clear and realistic plans in place to drive further improvement.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and the school has good working relationships with relevant agencies, parents and carers. As one parent, among others said: 'I am so pleased with Kingswood. I am confident that the school teaches my child well and keeps them safe.' Another reflected on the positive changes the headteacher and the staff had made to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a growing and increasingly more accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. After a period when governors were not so involved in challenging or holding the school to account, they are beginning to have a more realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Through reports, they monitor the outcomes for pupils and are keen to support the drive to raise pupils' levels of achievement. Under a new Chair of the Governing Body, they are well organised and seek evidence on the work of the school with increasing precision and challenge.
 - Governors hold leaders to account for the performance of staff and any subsequent pay awards. They understand how well the pupil premium funds are allocated and have a developing picture of its impact on the outcomes for those targeted pupils. They attend training regularly to keep up with changes to their responsibilities. They ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures meet national requirements.

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	115268
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	405577

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Underdown
Headteacher	Luke Bulpett
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2011
Telephone number	01268 520850
Fax number	01268 287602
Email address	admin@kingswood-jun.essex.sch.uk

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