

# Kingsthorpe Grove Primary School

St Davids Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, NN2 7QL

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Given their individual starting points when they join the school, pupils are making increasingly good progress in their learning and development.
- Pupils' achievement in the main part of the school is improving securely because teaching is consistently good and fosters their good attitudes to learning.
- The gap in attainment between pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium and their classmates is narrowing rapidly.
- The school's effective support for pupils' personal development encourages good behaviour and helps pupils understand how to stay safe.
- Leadership at all levels is good, from subject and key stage leaders to the senior leadership team and the governing body.
- The school's effectiveness, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have all improved since the previous inspection.
- The school's self-evaluation has focused well and successfully on how to improve.
- There is a robust system for the monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress.
- The work of the specially resourced provision for autistic pupils supports these pupils very well, particularly in their personal development and preparation for their future lives and education.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching, it is not yet consistently strong enough to ensure that most pupils, including the more able, make more rapid progress.
- The school's new policy of demanding the only very best standards of presentation in pupils' work has yet to have full impact.
- Teachers' marking, although effective in improving pupils' progress overall, does not always enable pupils to understand clearly enough what they need to improve.
- Teachers do not always insist that pupils act on their marking, so that they avoid similar mistakes in future.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning and teaching in 26 lessons; in total, 19 teachers and their teaching assistants were seen. Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and his two assistant headteachers. Registration times and assemblies were also observed.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work, and heard a sample of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils selected at random by the lead inspector. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including improvement plans, policies and reports on the school's strengths and aspects for development, monitoring records and reports, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families, and documents from the governing body. The school's data, including records of pupils' progress, were reviewed.
- Discussions and conversations were held with the headteacher and assistant headteachers, one of whom is the special educational needs coordinator and inclusion manager and manages the designated special provision for autistic pupils.
- In addition, discussions were held with subject leaders, class teachers, administrative staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, who is the school's improvement advisor.
- The 31 responses to the online questionnaire, *Parent View*, were taken into consideration. Some parents told the school that problems with the *Parent View* website had meant they had not been able to complete fully the on-line questionnaire. Subsequently, a few parents posted their comments on the school's own website, and these were passed on to the inspection team. The school's own surveys of its families were also taken into account.
- Inspectors also took account of the 35 responses to an inspection questionnaire for school staff.

## Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jenner

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Macfarlane

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- At its last inspection, in November 2012, the school was taken out of special measures and judged as requiring improvement.
- The large majority of the pupils come from White heritage backgrounds; most speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- A few pupils come from other heritage backgrounds, mainly from Black or Black British backgrounds, mixed heritage groups or Asian or Asian British heritage; a very few come from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue their education at the school until they leave at the end of Year 6, is below average.
- Due to family mobility in the area, higher than average numbers of pupils start at, or leave, the school at various times during any school year.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including, in this school, those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a specially resourced provision (The Owlets) for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. There are two 'sensory' classes and two for higher functioning pupils. This designated special provision (DSP) caters for up to 28 pupils aged between 4 and 11 years; all such pupils have a statement of special educational need.
- The school has an increasing proportion of pupils who join the school from abroad who do not have data on their prior attainment from British schools.
- The school works in partnership with the Kingsthorpe Children's Centre (URN 21690), which is on the same site as the school. Childcare provision for the school's pupils is also available on the site through the privately run 'Oscar's Out of School Club'. Both of these facilities are inspected separately by Ofsted.
- The school works in partnership with a group of five other local schools, known as the Northampton Town Learning Partnership (NTLP).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, enhance pupils' achievement, and raise standards even further across the school by:
  - strengthening the challenge for the school's most-able pupils by ensuring teachers set demanding and testing tasks and activities for them in lessons
  - ensuring that all marking consistently reflects the school's best practice by showing pupils more specifically and clearly what they need to improve
  - making sure pupils always act promptly and consistently on any advice in teachers' marking
  - encouraging pupils to maintain the very best standards of presentation in all their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are typically below those that are usually found for their various age groups when pupils join the school, most pupils achieve well and are making steadily improving progress. Most are now attaining broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Over the past two years there has been rapid and sustained improvement.
- Since being placed in special measures in February 2012, and being deemed to require improvement in November 2012, the school has ensured its pupils have made improving and increasingly secure progress. At its last inspection, progress was too uneven across the various year groups; this situation has now been resolved through good leadership and effective teaching.
- National data on the school's performance do not reflect the standards which the pupils in the main part of the school are achieving by the end of Years 2 and 6. In addition, some aspects of the rapid improvements made over the past two years in pupils' achievement and progress have yet to feed through into the nationally published data for the school.
- The school takes care to ensure that its assessments of its pupils are accurate by arranging for them to be independently checked and confirmed. Teachers, together with the headteacher, other senior leaders and governors, are therefore able to keep a careful watch on pupils' progress and take prompt action to prevent any from falling behind. Any support deemed necessary to get such pupils back on track is organised quickly and to good effect.
- Because the school tracks and monitors carefully the progress of all its pupils, it is able to show that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and also those in the DSP unit, make good progress. The school ensures that pupils from the autism unit are able to work regularly alongside mainstream pupils. This not only aids the learning of such pupils, but also reflects well on the school's approach to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.
- Pupils joining the school in either the Nursery or Reception years do so with levels of skills and development below those typically seen at their age, often across many of the expected areas of development, including their ability to communicate and their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, good attention is paid to the children's personal, social and emotional development so that they are ready for learning when they transfer to Key Stage 1. Particular attention is paid to the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) in order to prepare children for future reading and writing work. This is helping pupils to become more confident readers by breaking words down into their various sounds and thereby strengthening their ability to tackle new words successfully.
- The proportion of more-able pupils making better than expected progress is improving, particularly in writing, and is getting closer to the national average. However, the school recognises that there is more to do in this respect, particularly if the rate of progress of its more-able pupils is to accelerate even further. The success of the school with such pupils is reflected in the fact that, over the last two years, an increasing number of Year 6 pupils have shown the ability and confidence necessary for the school to enter them for higher level national tests.
- Those pupils currently supported through the pupil premium have made similarly good progress to their classmates. In some respects, such as reading by Year 2, their progress is currently the equivalent of about a term better. School data shows that the progress made by pupils in the

current Year 6 has already brought them close to the standards attained by similar pupils nationally in 2013 in both English and mathematics. School data indicate that the gap in the standards reached by those pupils eligible for additional funding and those reached by classmates has reduced to about a term.

- Pupils from minority heritage groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, make at least similarly good progress to their classmates, and in some year groups their progress is slightly better; this results from the effective support the school provides, particularly in speaking and listening.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is mostly good throughout the school. Discussions with a number of pupils showed that they considered their teachers 'to be one of the best things about the school'. They like the ways that, day-by-day, teachers make learning fun. Teachers and their assistants encourage positive working relationships; this underpins well the pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' learning is very well supported by teachers' very effective use of practical work and the support they provide for pupils' skills in undertaking investigations. Pupils' good progress was particularly evident in both Year 6 classes in mathematics where, following a reading of 'Aunty Jane and her tea cups', pupils had to deal with various combinations of different coloured crockery. There was good cooperation between pupils and clear evidence of imaginative thinking and thoughtful problem solving by pupils of all levels of ability in both classes.
- Lessons are well prepared; there is good evidence of cooperative teamwork by teachers and their assistants, and effective planning across each year group. Most teachers are good at asking questions of the pupils, both to check their understanding and to challenge their thinking. However, there is not always that additional edge of challenge in the activities set to spark an extra level of interest in the more-able pupils to accelerate their progress even further.
- Not all teachers always insist on high enough standards of handwriting, presentation, spelling and grammar. The school has recognised that presentation has not always been of the highest quality. A new policy aimed at improving it has been introduced recently. Although a good start has been made, this remains to be consistently applied in practice across all classes in the school.
- Discussions with pupils, and their work in books, shows marking, although very regular, is not yet always consistent enough in the guidance it gives pupils to help them accelerate their progress even more. In addition, not all teachers insist on pupils making regard to the comments or add those extra bits of work which would help pupils to move more quickly to the next level and enable their good progress to become excellent.
- Working relationships between staff and pupils are good because pupils appreciate the efforts their teachers go to make lessons interesting. Behaviour management is consistently good across the school, and the expectations that staff and pupils have of each other are equally positive. This helps well to build pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Teaching in the specialist unit for autistic pupils is consistently good. Teachers and their assistants in the DSP unit know and understand their pupils' needs very well; consequently, they consider well their pupils' personal as well as academic development. The unit is particularly strong on promoting social and communication skills. This has a major impact in building pupils' confidence and helping them prepare for life and learning in later years.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is also shown in the ways the ways pupils from different heritage backgrounds show respect for each other. Pupils want to come to school, and attendance rates this academic year have improved and are currently above average.
- Pupils respond well to the good pastoral care they receive, and the good working relationships that exist between adults and pupils. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management; pupils know where they stand and it is not often that pupils will overstep any boundaries.
- Discussion with parents at the start and end of the school day confirms that they, and their children, find the staff to be approachable. As one parent wrote on the school's website for inspectors, 'We've seen many changes at the school but some things have always remained the same – the happy learning environment it has provided for the children, the welcome-with-open-arms it provides for parents and the support it offers families.'
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good, but not yet outstanding because, occasionally, the attention of some pupils can slip if the work does not readily hold their attention. Pupils do not always maintain the very best standards of presentation in all their work. Not all pupils yet appreciate fully the need for consistently high quality presentation or the reasons why this is now being promoted more specifically across the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. School leaders have put in place clear systems to ensure good behaviour and keep pupils safe. Pupils are clear about the school's rules. Discussions with pupils show that they have a good understanding of the various types of bullying. They appreciate that some pupils can be 'naughty', but say that bullying is rare and show confidence that their teachers act quickly to put things right.
- The social and personal development of the pupils in the unit testifies to the significant success of staff in promoting this aspect of their pupils' education. The nature of the pupils' disability in the sensory classes means that a number have either very limited speech or an understanding of language. These pupils find processing information difficult and some may become easily distressed. The calm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the unit is testament to the work of the staff and the inclusive nature of the school.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Since the previous inspection, leaders at all levels, including the senior leadership team, subject leaders and governors, have worked together to ensure that the pupils' achievement has improved. Pupils' progress has accelerated, particularly in the main part of the school and pupils' achievement is now good; the variability in performance between different year groups has been corrected. Effectiveness is good. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and focused sharply on the key points that have been identified for further improvement to help the school move from good to outstanding.
- The headteacher has proved relentless in his drive to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. There has been close monitoring of teaching by leaders at all levels. Shared lesson observations show that the senior leadership team evaluates the quality of teaching and learning very professionally. The feedback given to staff on their work is by no means uncritical but it is also encouraging and focused on ensuring teaching is at least consistently good and securing more outstanding teaching.

- Pupils enjoy what is taught in the subjects and themes dealt with by school's curriculum. Learning is planned well, both in the main school and in the DSP unit. The Early Years Foundation Stage and DSP unit leaders work effectively to ensure that learning meets the needs of all pupils. Subject leaders are prepared to be held to account; they are equally as committed as the headteacher in their desire to enable pupils to accelerate their progress and achieve even better.
- Over the last two years, the local authority has monitored the school termly, and responded to requests for support from the school, for example in moderating pupils' work and undertaking observations of teaching and learning. The local authority recognises that, under the leadership of the headteacher, the school has become good at 'self-help' and has also made effective use of its partnership with other local schools in the area.
- Good use is being made of the primary school sports funding. This is enhancing the opportunities for pupils to participate and do well in sports and physical education. The school has employed a qualified sports coach to help lead staff training and this has enabled the school to increase its participation in local sports competitions.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body contribute well to the school. They use their personal and professional skills and expertise effectively not only to support the school but also to challenge it helpfully and constructively. They have played their part in helping the school to move from being inadequate two years ago to being good now.
  - The governing body understands well how the school is performing in relation to others nationally, and works productively with staff to ensure continued improvement. Governors undertake regular training, and are well-informed about their roles and responsibilities.
  - The governing body ensures that a suitable priority is placed upon enabling the school to meet its legal requirements, including those for safeguarding. Together with the headteacher and the school's bursar, they ensure the school's finances are managed properly.
  - The governing body has established clear policy guidelines to help leaders determine the effectiveness of staff and to ensure their salaries are linked to pupils' progress, teaching quality and National Teaching Standards.
  - Governors check that pupil premium funding has a good impact on the achievement of eligible pupils. The school is currently undertaking a restructuring of its staff to ensure that such funding will provide extra tuition and even more specialist teaching, support and resources to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged.
  - The governing body is adding to the government funding, from its own resources, in relation to both the pupil premium and sports funding, to ensure pupils' progress is accelerated further and to enhance pupils' lifestyles and to enable them to achieve even better over time.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121943
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	441943

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	480
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Craig
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jamie Nairn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 November 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 714674
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