

Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School

Kingstone, Hereford, HR2 9HJ

Inspection dates

16–17 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although pupils are kept safe when in school, leaders, including governors, have not ensured that all policies and procedures are up to date. Staff are not fully trained in all the latest requirements, including those relating to looked-after children and combating extremism.
- Teachers do not communicate well enough with each other and with teaching assistants when planning activities for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Neither do they offer these pupils clear advice on how to improve their work. Consequently, they do not make good progress in writing or mathematics.
- Leaders do not check that teaching and support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are effective in all subjects. As a result this group of pupils do not make good enough progress. School improvement plans do not identify raising these pupils' achievement as a priority. The role of the special educational needs coordinator in monitoring these aspects of the school's provision is underdeveloped.
- Teachers do not consistently plan activities that immediately capture the interest of boys, which limits their progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Most groups of pupils are making rapid progress as a result of improved teaching. Standards have risen faster than the national average for the last three years and are currently above average in Year 6.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teachers set them challenging tasks.
- Leaders have made good use of pupil premium funds. Disadvantaged pupils now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The head of primary, governors and most subject managers have improved many aspects of teaching and achievement since the last inspection.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good.
- The work of the learning mentor is outstanding. Attendance is rising, exclusions have fallen to zero and persistent absenteeism is reducing rapidly.
- Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons. They are very polite and learn good manners.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is good.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Staff plan well together to make sure activities consistently build upon what each child already knows, understands and can do.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, including one jointly with the head of primary. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils reading and analysed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors spoke to parents informally during the inspection to gather their views.
- Inspectors observed the school's work including arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They looked at a number of documents including: the schools own information on pupils' progress; the school's evaluation of its performance; records relating to attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rowena Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- Children attend the Reception class full time.
- An average proportion of pupils is disabled or has special educational needs.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils currently known to be eligible for free school meals, those who have been eligible for free school meals at any time in the last six years and looked-after children) is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is part of the Kingstone Academy Trust. It operates as part of a federation with Kingstone High School, with which it shares a governing body and some staff. These include a special educational needs coordinator and an executive headteacher, who oversees the work of the school's headteacher.
- A new learning mentor and a new early years leader were appointed from September 2014.
- Throughout this report the term 'head of primary' refers to the headteacher of the primary school as this is her usual title.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate the progress of disabled pupil and those who have special educational needs by ensuring that teachers:
 - liaise more closely with other teachers and teaching assistants so that the tasks given to these pupils are not too hard or too easy
 - check that these pupils have fully understood what they are to do
 - provide more precise advice on what these pupils need to improve and how to improve it, with particular reference to the basic skills in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the progress of boys in writing by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan activities in literacy that are of greater interest to boys and motivate them to be more ambitious and purposeful in their writing.
- Improve leadership and management, particularly of the support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, by:
 - developing the role of the special needs coordinator in checking the quality of teaching and evaluating its impact upon the achievement of this group of pupils
 - ensuring that the raising of these pupils' standards is a priority in all subject and whole school development plans, and checking that these plans include clear strategies showing how this will be achieved.
- Improve the provision for safeguarding by ensuring that:
 - policies are kept up to date
 - staff are routinely made aware of all the latest guidance on safeguarding issues
 - governors check more closely that statutory requirements are met
 - the designated teacher for looked-after children has had the appropriate training.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not paid enough attention to safeguarding. On arriving at the school, inspectors found that the school's safeguarding policy was out of date and staff had not been given the most recent guidance provided by the government. The head of primary took immediate action to rectify these weaknesses and most statutory requirements had been met by the end of the first day of the inspection.
- Although governors have appointed a teacher for looked-after children, she has not yet received the necessary training, and this aspect of safeguarding still does not meet statutory requirements.
- Despite these significant oversights on the part of leaders, the school has otherwise ensured that its systems are sufficiently secure to ensure pupils are safe when in the school. For example, although the safeguarding policy provided the wrong contact details for the local authority, all staff carry a card containing the correct details so they know who to contact if there is a safeguarding concern.
- Leaders have not placed sufficient emphasis on improving the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs; these have been treated as less of a priority than other groups. Consequently, while the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and the most able has risen, the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs still requires improvement.
- Subject and whole school development plans make little or no reference to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs; consequently, efforts to raise their achievement have not been well-coordinated.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders requires improvement because the impact of the special educational needs coordinator is not good enough. The coordinator plays little part in checking the quality of teaching or the impact it is having on pupils' progress.
- Other middle leaders, such as the coordinators for English, mathematics and the early years, contribute well to the school's focus on driving up standards. They have identified clearly the most important areas for improvement in their areas of responsibility and drawn up successful plans to address them.
- Standards are rising across the school because the head of primary has high expectations of, and has made significant improvements to, teaching. Swift actions were taken to tackle weak teaching. With the exception of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, the school ensures pupils enjoy the same good opportunities to succeed, and most achieve well. For example, the teaching of phonics and of disadvantaged pupils were both key weaknesses at the time of the last inspection, for example, and these aspects are now strengths of the school. However, aspects of the support for boys' writing are not as good as they could be.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching across the school. They know that there is more work to be done to ensure that the teaching of boys' writing and of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is consistently good. Actions to address these remaining weaknesses are being planned.
- The head of primary has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This has led to staff insisting on good behaviour at all times, both in and out of lessons. Behaviour is now good, whereas at the previous inspection it required improvement. The head of primary has implemented a 'zero tolerance' approach to discrimination, which all pupils respect. Consequently, there have been no incidents relating to pupils using discriminatory words or actions for several years.
- Leaders have made good use of the pupil premium funds. A key part of the improvement has been the appointment of the learning mentor, who, in a single term, has had a dramatic impact on disadvantaged pupils' attendance, punctuality and behaviour. These pupils are now keen learners and make consistently good progress.

- The school's leaders have also made good use of extra funds for promoting sport and physical education. They have appointed specialist coaches to train teachers and extend the range of sports available to them. Consequently, pupils' standards are rising and more pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, are playing sports on a regular basis.
- The curriculum requires improvement for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, because it is not well enough matched to their abilities and needs. In all other respects, the curriculum is good. Pupils quickly see the point in what they are learning because of the clever way subjects are linked, so that pupils' mathematics skills are reinforced in geography, for example. Every topic includes references to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, so these aspects are covered in detail as pupils move through the school.
- The head of primary and other leaders place a strong emphasis on teaching pupils about British values, so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Each month there is a different aspect chosen as a theme, which is then reinforced through assemblies, topic lessons and special events. The current theme is tolerance. In addition, pupils learn about other concepts that play a central part in the British way of life, such as democracy. Members of the school council, for example, go through a formal election process, including secret ballots, in order to be elected.
- The school has received good support from the Kingstone Academy Trust and in particular, the executive headteacher. The school has benefitted from the management expertise the trust has been able to provide and from the support it has given to improve teaching.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have not ensured that statutory requirements for safeguarding have been met in every respect. Although they have reviewed the safeguarding policy, they have not done so rigorously, so it was not up-to-date when inspectors arrived at the school. Some required aspects, such as combating extremism, were not included. All omissions were rectified immediately, but governors have not paid the same attention to safeguarding as they have to their other responsibilities.
- Other aspects of governance are good and a review of governance is not needed. Governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, and know where the strengths and weaknesses lie. They have ensured that teachers only receive a pay rise if their pupils have made good enough progress. Governors have fully supported the head of primary when weak teaching has had to be tackled and know where it is good and what needs to be improved.
- Governors have a good understanding of performance data, such as the school's results, and use this well to challenge the head of primary and to ensure that the school continues to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is generally good. Pupils usually have good attitudes to learning. In reading and mathematics lessons they quickly get down to work and concentrate hard for the full duration of the lesson.
- Behaviour itself has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Children are taught to behave well as soon as they start in the early years. Pupils behave well at play and look out for younger ones to make sure that they come to no harm during games. Around school, pupils walk quietly so as not to disturb others and are polite and respectful to all adults.
- The number of pupils excluded from school was very high at the time of the last inspection. The proportion fell in 2013/14 but still remained well above the national average. The appointment of the learning mentor has brought substantial and rapid improvements. There have been no exclusions since December 2014 and incidents of misbehaviour are now very rare.
- The learning mentor is expert in identifying signs of weakening behaviour and intervening before they

become an issue. She organises several groups in school to help pupils who have difficulties managing their behaviour at specific times. For example, an inclusion teaching assistant works with a small group at lunchtimes to ensure that they can cope with time that is not tightly structured.

- Attendance has improved at a faster rate than the national average for the past three years and continues to do so. It is now above average. Most importantly, the learning mentor has successfully worked with parents to improve the punctuality and attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who previously were frequently absent now have good attendance records and are rarely late for school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. The school's failure to check that all policies are up-to-date and to plan specialist training for relevant staff in good time means that safeguarding procedures are not as effective as they should be. Nevertheless, pupils are safe at the school because teachers continue to consistently implement old policies which keep pupils safe.
- Pupils feel safe at the school. There have been no recorded incidents of bullying in the last two years and pupils say that there are only isolated incidents of pushing and shoving that teachers do not allow to escalate.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Children in the early years, for example, learn about harmful plants in 'Forest School'. Older pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet, and take account of age guidance when choosing computer games and videos.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not ensure boys make consistently good progress in writing or that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs always achieve as well as they should.
- Teachers do not plan lessons in writing well enough to secure boys' interest and immediate involvement. While girls pay close attention to the teacher from the very start, boys are sometimes slower to start their work and make too little progress in the first ten minutes or so of a writing lesson. More teachers are now starting their lessons more effectively and imaginatively and encourage boys to get straight down to work, but this is not consistently the case across the school.
- Teachers do not always give disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs tasks that are well enough matched to their abilities. Often this is because teachers and teaching assistants have not discussed what pupils have previously learnt or the tasks they have done. In one case, for example, a group of such pupils were given a task that they had already carried out, but there was nothing else for them to do, so they did it again and learned little from the experience. Sometimes the tasks are too difficult or not explained well enough, so these pupils do not know what they are supposed to be doing.
- Teachers do not consistently give disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs precise advice on what they need to improve and how to go about it. In several cases, pupils had difficulties with the basics of English and mathematics, but were not given good enough guidance to help them improve.
- In the case of all other groups, teaching is good and teachers ensure pupils make consistently good progress. Teachers carefully adapt tasks to match the abilities and known progress of the most-able pupils and most other pupils.
- The teaching of reading is good. Teachers in the early years take every opportunity to encourage children to read letters accurately. Other teachers build on this good start well, by carefully matching activities to small groups of pupils who are the same stage of learning to read.
- More fluent readers are encouraged to read widely. Teachers check assiduously that pupils are reading at home and are quick to contact parents if a reading diary is not completed. Consequently, pupils read many books. Even the lowest attainers in Year 2 have read more than 80 books this year; a feat of which

they are justifiably proud.

- In mathematics, teachers choose engaging and interesting tasks that enable most pupils to make good progress. However, as with other subjects, boys are sometimes slow to engage with the lesson. Teachers set particularly demanding tasks for the most able that encourage them to think more deeply. In Year 5, for example, pupils had to use maps to find the distance by road between Los Angeles and San Francisco, convert the mileage to kilometres and calculate the fuel used in litres. Pupils were made to think hard about why their results differed from those of their peers, who had chosen to 'travel' by different routes.
- The teaching of writing is generally good. Teachers give very clear and accurate demonstrations of how to use correct punctuation and grammar. In one lesson, for example, the teacher explained how speech marks were used in different contexts and pupils were soon using them in their own writing.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because boys do not make consistently good progress in writing and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make good progress overall.
- The standards reached by boys in writing lag behind those of girls in most year groups. Typically, girls' standards in writing are above average and those of boys are average. Girls make good progress, while that of boys requires improvement. Boys lose learning time at the start of lessons when they do not settle immediately to the task they have been set.
- Because the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement they generally reach standards in Year 6 that are lower than they could be, compared with other groups in the school who achieve well. Teachers do not ensure that this group of pupils is improving their understanding of the basics in English and mathematics fast enough. The standards for other pupils are now above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved at a faster rate than the national average since the school was last inspected. Data held by the school and inspectors' judgements of work in books and lessons suggest most pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to continue this trend.
- The most-able pupils are given challenging work and make good progress. Such pupils made slower progress in mathematics in 2014 than they did in reading and writing. The school's leaders adapted the curriculum to ensure such pupils are given more demanding tasks, and their progress is now some of the best in the school.
- The gap in standards between disadvantaged pupils and others has closed dramatically since the school was last inspected. At that time, disadvantaged pupils were more than two years behind other pupils nationally and more than a year behind other pupils in the school in reading writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils reached standards similar to other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics. They were nearly a year ahead of other pupils in the school in mathematics, and around a term ahead in reading. In writing, disadvantaged pupils were behind others nationally and in school by around two terms. However, this gap has closed further this year. Disadvantaged pupils are now making consistently good progress and reaching standards that are similar to other pupils, both in school and nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the early years with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age, except in reading and writing where standards are lower. In 2014 they made good progress in most areas of learning. However, their progress was slower in writing and standards remained below average on starting Year 1, reflecting

these children's low starting points on entry. Children are now making consistently good progress and exceed age related expectations in almost all areas of learning, including writing.

- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make better progress than in Years 1 to 6 because staff in the early years plan together more effectively than staff in other year-groups.
- Staff and parent helpers work very well as a team to assess children accurately and plan activities that build on what they already know, understand and can do. The early years leader is quick to identify any weaknesses in children's achievement and plans tasks carefully to address them.
- Activities are invariably well organised. In a 'Forest Schools' activity, for example, the class was split into three groups. One worked on their understanding of shapes, another on their fine control of a pencil and the final group on their coordination. Each child thoroughly enjoyed the activities of finding shapes and identifying their characteristics, drawing leaves after observing them through a magnifying glass or making prints of leaves with a piece of cloth and rubber mallet. More importantly, all made good progress in areas of learning which needed development.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on keeping pupils safe. Risk assessments are thorough and teachers take great care to ensure that children are supervised at all times in the large outdoor area. Staff consistently reinforce the importance of good behaviour and attitudes. All children quickly learn to take turns and listen when others are speaking.
- The early years goes from strength to strength under the good leadership of the member of staff responsible. The leader analyses data on children's standards and progress in great depth to gain a complete picture of where the strengths in provision lie and where further actions need to be taken. As a result, standards are rising as children make faster progress.

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	137415
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	462574

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Shearer
Headteacher	Steve Fisher (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2013
Telephone number	01981 250338
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