

Katesgrove Primary School

Dorothy Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 2NL

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher provides exceptional leadership. She is robust, rigorous and relentless in her drive to improve the school. She is determined that every pupil has the best opportunity to succeed.
- Her senior leadership team shares her vision and ambition for all the pupils in the school. Leaders work tirelessly to provide good education and care for all.
- Governors are highly effective. They carry out their roles with great professionalism and ensure that leaders are held to account.
- Teaching across the school is good, because of the decisive and effective action taken by senior leaders. As a consequence, outcomes for all groups of pupils are improving significantly.
- Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' work to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This information is then used well to plan lessons that build upon and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teaching is not routinely challenging enough for all pupils. This means that some pupils could make even better progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and the majority make good progress. This is because teachers' precise analysis ensures that these pupils receive high-quality support and challenge in all lessons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress across the curriculum as a result of effective support.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes receive a good start to their education because the rich environment and high standards of care support them to make rapid progress.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. The school's safeguarding systems are meticulous, with all staff fully understanding that this aspect of their work has the highest priority.
- Pupils work and play together regardless of their age, gender or background. They behave well in class and around school.
- The large majority of parents are very positive about the changes implemented by the current leadership team, and support leaders in the task of continuing to improve the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is challenging all pupils, so that all achieve the higher standards in all subjects.
- Continue to develop the teaching of mathematics to improve the ability of all pupils to reason and think mathematically.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her energy and passion are infectious and she is highly respected by all within the school's community. Since her arrival two years ago, she has led significant improvements in the education and care of all pupils. She runs a very happy school and staff morale is high. Pupils want to come to school to learn, and families know that, once their children are at school, they are safe, nurtured and well educated.
- The senior staff are a strong team. They have taken determined and effective action to improve the school. They support the development of good teaching effectively, resulting in more rapid progress across the school. They are highly committed to improving outcomes for all pupils. Weak teaching has been eradicated and pupils' achievement and behaviour have improved. The senior team has shown, through what it has achieved already, that it has the capacity to improve the school further. Leaders have a clear view of what needs to be addressed in the next stage of the school's development, and staff share their motivation and ambition to improve.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of their school and take swift action to address any concerns. They make good use of all the information they have about pupils to ensure that individual needs are met and that pupils achieve well.
- The impact of leaders' decisions and actions are evident in the improved rates of progress and better outcomes for current pupils. Senior leaders work closely with subject leaders to develop their ability to challenge and support staff. They ensure that subject leaders make clear judgements about the progress pupils make and the impact of teaching. Rates of progress in reading and writing are improving fast, but further work is required to ensure that pupils' outcomes in mathematics are improving at a similar rate, across all year groups.
- The executive headteacher is skilled in recognising talented staff and supporting them to become good leaders. For example, skilful leadership from the higher-level teaching assistant who works with pupils who speak English as an additional language ensures that pupils and their families are welcomed into school and receive good support to develop their English. These pupils make at least good progress across the curriculum.
- There is strong support for newly qualified teachers and a specific programme of professional training is in place to develop their practice.
- The school adopted a new curriculum in June 2017. This teaches the knowledge and skills of the national curriculum through first-hand experiences for pupils of things they may not otherwise encounter. The town of Reading and its '4 Bs' of biscuits, bulbs, beer and bricks are frequently used as learning themes and initial stimuli for lessons. For example, the descendants of Trooper Potts, and members of the Berkshire Yeomanry, have been to the school to share the achievements of Trooper Potts during World War 1. They tell the story of when, during the war, he saved another soldier's life by pulling him many miles to safety on a shovel. The pupils relay this story enthusiastically, and write down their thoughts and responses with enthusiasm and real empathy.

- The management of teachers' performance is closely linked to pupils' progress, with the expectation that all pupils will make at least good progress. Teachers only receive pay rises when merited by sustained good performance. High-quality professional development is carefully planned to link with whole-school priorities, as well as individual teachers' needs.
- Additional government funds, such as the pupil premium grant and the primary physical education and sport premium, are directed carefully to support pupils' engagement in learning, with a sharp focus on the progress they make. The impact of this money is carefully monitored by governors and an annual report is available on the school's website.
- The school promotes fundamental British values consistently through pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils respect one another and learn about the different cultures and beliefs within their school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Good support from the local authority has been instrumental in ensuring that the school has strong leaders and good teachers to provide high-quality education and care for all pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors know their school well and share the school's vision and ethos. They have supported the school through a period of considerable change and are well placed to provide further support and challenge.
- The chair of the governing body takes a wise and measured approach to her role. She is absolutely committed to making the school the very best that it can be.
- Governors use their time in school to talk with pupils and staff, to get first-hand information about what is working well and what could be even better. Governors use what they know to challenge leaders effectively.
- Governors support senior leaders and hold them to account for the progress different groups of pupils make. Governors are equipped with the information they need to understand how pupils' progress is measured. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions about any underachievement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safety, welfare and the protection of pupils are of paramount importance to the school and, due to rigorous practice, pupils are safe and very well cared for. The appointment of a pastoral support worker shows how much leaders deem the welfare and safety of their pupils to be a priority. The improvements that the pastoral support worker has delivered since his appointment have been exceptional and have ensured that the school is a safe place. His work with individual pupils and their families ensures that the best possible outcomes are achieved. The policies and protocols that leaders have established provide a framework that enables the focus to be on learning so that pupils' life chances are improved.

- All adults across the school receive regular safeguarding training and updates about keeping pupils safe. All staff are diligent in following the school's procedures for child protection. Senior leaders will challenge other agencies if they feel that the support being offered is not in the best interests of the pupil. Leaders are tenacious and go the extra mile for every pupil in their care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Poor teaching, in the recent past, has been challenged by senior leaders. Leaders' high expectations, which are clearly communicated, have led to improvements across the school. Now pupils are making faster progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They plan engaging lessons, based on their understanding of pupils' prior learning. Along with skilled teaching assistants, teachers provide highly effective support by asking pupils probing questions and challenging any misconceptions. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the pupils were using the 'KFC' method (Keep. Flip. Change.) to divide fractions by whole numbers. A pupil was eager to share the mistake she had made in her work and explained why she knew it was wrong. This was celebrated as the 'mistake of the day', and supported other pupils in the checking of their own work.
- Pupils often read out loud during lessons. This is helping them to develop into confident and able readers, and allows teachers to monitor their reading progress. The impact of the school's key focus on extending pupils' vocabulary can be clearly seen when pupils talk about their reading. They are able to compare texts, identify key features and challenge different perspectives.
- Pupils want to learn about the world around them. Year 3 pupils waited excitedly for the egg in their classroom to hatch, so they can meet the 'Wagasarus'! The teacher used the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in science and geography, and gave them a clear message about working hard to achieve something extraordinary.
- Pupils take pride in their work and are very keen to talk about it. They work cooperatively, and teachers provide lots of opportunities for them to collaborate and share ideas. They are very flexible learners and this reflects their self-confidence.
- The school's practice of teachers checking pupils' progress during the lesson supports the rapid pace of learning. Pupils really appreciate that an adult will respond to their work quickly, so they can move on or receive additional help.
- Homework is well planned and supports pupils' progress and the development of their independent learning skills. Pupils enjoy the range of homework activities that they can choose from.
- Pupils like to be challenged in their lessons. However, there are some classes where a higher level of challenge is needed, particularly in mathematics. In some lessons, there is too much focus on straightforward calculation and not enough on pupils having to think mathematically to work out how to solve problems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a friendly, calm and nurturing atmosphere around the school. Although the school is made up of four separate buildings, there is no doubt that this is one school with shared values and goals.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud of the progress they make. There are many pupils who join the school part way through the school year. The staff and pupils embrace the needs of these new arrivals very quickly, and support them to settle. A buddy system is used in which a new pupil is partnered with a pupil from a similar background.
- Pupils are very respectful of one another. They have friendship groups across ethnic, religious, social and cultural boundaries and enjoy learning about each other's lives.
- The school ensures that pupils are aware of how to stay safe and behave responsibly with technology. Pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and staying fit. A wide range of sporting activities during and after school support them to do this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are highly motivated and understand that learning is important. They share the school's high expectations for behaviour and safety. They are clear about the school's rules and respond quickly to adults' actions to address any low-level disruption.
- Bullying is very rare. Any incidents are properly recorded by staff and dealt with rapidly and effectively.
- Pupils are very courteous and respectful to visitors, and their manners are exemplary. They take good care of their school and one another's property.
- Attendance has recently been a focus for improvement. During the last year, the school has addressed poor levels of attendance very successfully. There has been a determined effort to work with parents to ensure that their children attend school. Leaders' current 'Every Minute Matters' campaign continues to send out very clear messages about the importance of being in school, every day and on time.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders know that pupils at Katesgrove have not achieved as well as other pupils nationally in the last three years. However, over the last two years it is clear that pupils have started to catch up. Currently, the majority of pupils in the school are making at least good progress from their different starting points, with some pupils making more rapid progress. Progress made by current pupils in mathematics is not as strong as in other subjects. Leaders are absolutely clear that progress must be accelerated for all pupils, so that by the time pupils leave the school they are well prepared for their secondary education.

- Current disadvantaged pupils make accelerated progress in all subjects, across all year groups, because of well-targeted support and teaching. They are making better progress than pupils who are not disadvantaged, and are catching up with all pupils nationally.
- Pupils attending Katesgrove who speak English as an additional language make exceptionally good progress across all areas of the curriculum, because of the skilled support and commitment of the adults who work with them.
- Over the last two years, most children in Reception have achieved at least the expected standard of a good level of development, by making good progress in Nursery and Reception. Pupils with SEN and/or disabilities do not make the same strong rate of progress by the end of Reception.
- Phonics is now taught consistently by teachers and teaching assistants as a result of comprehensive training organised by leaders. Regular checks are made on the impact of phonics teaching on pupils' progress in reading. This has resulted in significantly improved outcomes in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and Year 2 for the last two years.
- Regular pupil progress meetings enable leaders and teachers to discuss the tracking of each individual's progress, and identify strategies to support those pupils who need more help. This ensures that needs are identified and interventions are put in place quickly.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and understanding typically below those expected on entry. Many of the children and their families have limited or no English language, and some children have very limited speech and language development.
- The experienced early years leader cares deeply about every child and works hard with her team to ensure that children's needs are identified, so that they receive appropriate support.
- Leaders have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They have recently reviewed the role of key workers to ensure that every moment of learning is captured and used to help children improve in all aspects of their development. Staff keep thorough and regular assessments of each child's progress. Ongoing assessments are consistently maintained and fed directly into the early years planning and provision, so that children really do learn 'in the moment'.
- Well-planned and purposeful play helps children to learn, as adults ask questions and encourage conversations about the activities they are enjoying. For example, children enjoyed making cheese sandwiches. They talked about working together, how they were going to cut the sandwiches up and how they would share them out for eating.
- Relationships between home and school are strong and parents are very positive about the education their children are receiving.

- The focus on developing children’s communication and language skills through purposeful play helps children to develop their independence and confidence, as well as their speaking and listening skills.
- Good teaching ensures that, by the end of Reception, most children have made good progress from their different starting points, with the majority reaching a good level of development. This includes the most able, the disadvantaged and those children who speak English as an additional language. This means that majority of children are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Leaders know that some children who have SEN and/or disabilities are not yet making a similar rate of progress to others, but are working to address this.
- All welfare requirements are met and the children are well cared for, happy and safe.

School details

Unique reference number	109920
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10037801

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	692
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lynda Miller
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Telling
Telephone number	0118 9375490
Website	www.katesgrove.reading.sch.uk
Email address	admin@katesgrove.reading.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2015 to support the school, following the departure of the previous headteacher. She is also the executive headteacher of another local primary school. Both schools will federate in January 2018 and will have one governing body.
- The executive headteacher is currently supported by an interim head of school.
- Since the previous inspection, the governing body has been replaced. The current governing body was established in November 2016.
- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school in the heart of Reading, with a Nursery and three Reception classes. It has a significantly high proportion of pupils moving into and out of the school at times other than the normal admission points.

- Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, and 69% of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below that in other schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium is similar to the national 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 by the end of Year 6.
- A breakfast club, run by the school, is provided for all pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons across the school and in a range of subjects. Most observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s website and one inspector checked the single central record.
- Inspectors worked in partnership with the school’s senior leaders to analyse the school’s own assessment information for current pupils. The inspectors looked at pupils’ outcomes, the school’s evaluation of its own performance, its development plan, and the monitoring and evaluation records for teaching. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- Inspectors also gathered information about the curriculum from pupils’ work on display, and from observing extra-curricular activities.
- Inspectors spent time on the playground before school and at lunchtime, listened to pupils read and looked at work in pupils’ books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the higher-level teaching assistant responsible for supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language. An inspector met the pastoral support leader to consider safeguarding, attendance and welfare.
- The lead inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair, and also met with the local authority’s representative.
- An inspector reviewed 252 responses from pupils to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, and a group of pupils discussed their opinions about school and their learning with an inspector. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors took account of 30 staff questionnaires, and considered 57 responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire. One hundred and fifty-five responses to Ofsted’s online parent survey, Parent View, were considered, together with 122 free-text comments. The inspectors also had discussions with 27 parents before and after school.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Deirdre Crutchley	Ofsted Inspector
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Clare Haines	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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