



Kingswood Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118524
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280336
Inspection dates 23 November 2005 to 23 November 2005
Reporting inspector Robin Hammerton HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cayser Drive
School category	Community		Kingswood
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Maidstone, Kent ME17 3QF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01622 842674
Number on roll	87	Fax number	01622 842674
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Evans
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2003	Headteacher	Miss J Brown

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Kingswood is a small rural primary school serving a village near Maidstone. All classes are mixed age. Most pupils are White British and there is a small group of pupils from Traveller backgrounds. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. The socio-economic situation of the school is average, though more pupils than is typical have special educational needs. At the last inspection, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in the teaching in some classes.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well in all the circumstances than it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 and the teaching in Years 2 and 3.

The headteacher, staff and governors, with guidance from the local authority, have made several successful improvements since the last inspection. Improvement since then is satisfactory overall. Because their self-evaluation is broadly accurate, they recognise that further improvements are still needed. Nevertheless, they considered that the school now provides a satisfactory standard of education. Inspectors disagree. Despite many strengths, the school is not yet sufficiently effective.

Teaching and progress in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 are satisfactory. They are good in Years 4 to 6. However, in Years 2 and 3, teaching does not do enough to meet the pupils' needs and standards are very low. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money because of the low standards achieved by a significant group of pupils.

The school is a caring community where pupils are well looked after. The curriculum is adequate, although some skills are not developed progressively enough. The school has clearly demonstrated the capacity to improve, taking increasing responsibility for its own development. It draws up suitable plans with resources allocated. Nevertheless, whilst staff with management roles work hard, they need to know more precisely what is expected of them.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise the standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 by improving the quality of teaching in Years 2 and 3
- ensure assessment data is used to provide work which is well matched to pupils' needs consistently in all year groups
- improve the curriculum so that the key skills and concepts to be taught are clearly identified and progressively developed
- clarify the main purposes of all management roles and how post holders will be held accountable

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children start in Reception with a range of abilities and needs. They make satisfactory progress and, overall, enter Key Stage 1 with average attainment. However, by the end of Year 2, and in Year 3, standards in English and mathematics have fallen since the last inspection and are now very low. This is due, in part, to staffing difficulties last year, which were beyond the school's control, but hindered these pupils' education.

Nevertheless, the pupils involved should be doing better. Conversely, by Year 6, standards have risen notably. Pupils make good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 and achieve well, especially in English and science. Standards in these subjects are above average. In mathematics, standards are broadly average. Pupils who are Travellers, as well those with learning difficulties and English as an additional language, progress as well as the other pupils in the same class.

Basic targets, using National Curriculum levels, have been set for all pupils. These are starting to show some impact on attainment. However, they have yet to make a significant difference in Key Stage 1 and Year 3.

In its self-evaluation, the school considered that, overall, standards and achievement were satisfactory. Inspectors, however, judge that the pupils' achievement is inadequate because of the attainment at Key Stage 1 and in Year 3.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance has improved significantly, and is now above average. Pupils are generally attentive in lessons, though they become noticeably more interested and inspired when the teaching is better. Pupils care for one another, looking out for each other's safety and well-being. Parents say how well the older pupils, who are trained to be peer mediators, look after the younger ones. This makes pupils feel safe and helps them to enjoy school. Some parents consider, and inspectors agree, that pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about a wide range of cultures. In assemblies, pupils reflect suitably on moral issues.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

There have been improvements since the last inspection. Lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6 are now well planned, lively and interesting. Good questioning develops pupils' thinking. Pupils have well focused individual targets, based on assessment data, and receive timely feedback about how they are getting on. This enables them to make good progress. In Reception, suitable changes have been made, in accordance with Foundation Stage guidance. The teaching is satisfactory, as it is for pupils in Year 1.

However, in Years 2 and 3, there are significant limitations. The teachers, who job share, support each other and are determined to do the best for the pupils. They manage the classroom suitably and assess pupils carefully. The school has put suitable assessment procedures in place but, as yet, the written targets provided to help pupils improve their work do not match the assessments closely. They are not changed often enough to provide momentum. Therefore, learning tasks do not always meet individual pupils' needs. Sometimes, pupils lose interest because the teaching is not engaging. Staff do not always notice this. These weaknesses mean that pupils make slow progress. Pupils in Year 3 are not regaining the lost ground from last year.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements. National Primary Strategy materials are well used, particularly in English, to provide some engaging lessons in Years 4 to 6. Computers are now used well to support learning. Pupils with particular talents are identified and increasingly have special activities provided. However, pupils in Year 1 sometimes have a reduced curriculum when the teacher is more focused on Reception. The overall curriculum plan does not ensure well enough that skills and knowledge are developed progressively as pupils move through the school. For example, in music, there is not enough clarity about how specific areas, such as composition or improvisation, will be taught and then built on. This hinders the raising of standards.

There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. An after school club is helpful to several families.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Kingswood School is a small, friendly community. Adults know the pupils well and care deeply for each one. Relationships are positive and sensitive. For example, staff ensured that a tragedy within the community was used to enable pupils to learn about themselves. Older pupils now complete a daily journal to reflect on their feelings.

In the Foundation Stage, the young children are enabled to learn independently. Throughout the school, marking of work is now good. Pupils find the 'thought bubbles', which they write in their books, an excellent way of showing their ideas and asking teachers for advice and help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has developed her ability to appraise the school more rigorously and bring about change. Support from the local authority has helped build the school's capacity to improve. The governing body has helped by improving its own work, providing appropriate support and challenge. The school's main strengths and weaknesses are correctly identified. From this self-evaluation, staff and governors produce realistic improvement plans and are able to demonstrate the impact of these. For example, staff planned how to increase the range of activities involving computers, keeping evidence of how this raised pupils' attainment. Communications with parents, including regular newsletters, provide valuable information. Most parents are satisfied with the school and feel they can have their say, though some consider they are not well enough listened to.

Alongside this generally positive picture, however, there are issues to resolve. Although the school recognises that standards at Key Stage 1 are too low, sorting this out and checking the progress of the pupils involved has not been given high enough priority. The senior teacher and curriculum leaders have made progress in improving the areas

for which they are responsible. However, despite recent helpful training, there is insufficient clarity about what is required of these staff, what authority they have, and how they are held accountable. Too much is done informally. This is hindering progress in developing the curriculum systematically and improving the use of assessment data.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The Pupils Kingswood Primary School Cayser Drive Kingswood

December 2005

Dear Pupils of Kingswood School

Mr Morris and I enjoyed our visit to Kingswood. Thank you for telling us all about yourselves, what you enjoy and how you are learning. We liked your school. It is a happy place and the adults care for you really well. You are very kind to each other, which is brilliant! It's great that you have so few days off school. Well done! Lots of things have improved and are going well, but we think that the school needs to get better still. So we have arranged for some more inspectors to come back in about a year to see how things are going then.

We really liked your thought bubbles. So I have done one for you. When we came, we found out that the teachers are giving you targets. These are a good idea, and you know them very well, but sometimes they should be set more often to help you to learn even better. Lots of your lessons and subjects are interesting but we think some of them can be planned more clearly to help you to learn more. Most of your teachers do not just teach you and look after you but do something else as well, like being in charge of some subjects for the whole school. Miss Brown is going to think about how she can help them to do an even better job with this. You can help by carrying on working hard, telling your teachers politely what you think about your school, and helping each other.

With very best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools