

# King's Court First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109827
<b>Local Authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	288504
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sean O'Toole

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tracy Rose
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Fox
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2001
<b>School address</b>	Ashbrook Road Old Windsor Windsor SL4 2NE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 866272
<b>Fax number</b>	01753 832385

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is located in an area of economic advantage and admits children from a wide area. Few children are eligible for free school meals. A low percentage have learning difficulties and an average proportion have statements of special educational needs. About three-quarters come from White British backgrounds. Four Polish speakers are at an early stage of learning English. Children start school with a wide range of abilities; attainment on admission to Year 1 is above average. The school has the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark. There have been some recent staff changes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The staff, parents and governors work together very well to fulfil the school's motto, 'A school for the children'. At the heart of its work is a commitment to creating an environment in which children thrive. This good school has several outstanding features which contribute much to children's outstanding personal development and well-being. High levels of care and the focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable children are hallmarks of the school's success. As one parent said, 'It's a school whose pastoral care of pupils is first rate'.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage, benefiting from a challenging curriculum and highly focused teaching which fosters academic and personal skills. The outstanding curriculum contributes much to children's love of learning and enhances their personal and social development. Behaviour and relationships are excellent. Children are highly motivated, work productively and achieve well. By the time they leave the school standards in English and mathematics are well above average. This success owes much to the excellent progress in developing early reading and writing skills in Years 1 and 2. Although the children use computers to support their work in other subjects they lack confidence in information and communication technology (ICT), especially word processing. There is a lack of some equipment which also hampers progress.

Children are prepared excellently for the future. Their grasp of how to live healthily through eating well and taking plenty of exercise contributes greatly to their well-being. They confidently participate in a wide range of community activities and the school council has recently been involved in interviewing prospective headteachers. Excellent personal qualities are nurtured by the staff who are ambitious to see every child succeed. Good teaching, excellent support for those with learning difficulties and high levels of parental support underpin the school's work. Teachers and support staff know the children well and plan and prepare thoroughly. They encourage independence and use praise to motivate and inspire. Work is marked regularly but does not provide sufficient guidance or targets to help the children to improve.

The school is led and managed well and governors provide much support. Staff work together and have successfully tackled issues from the previous inspection which has led to good improvement in provision and higher standards. They are focused on improvement and have the capacity to succeed. For example, plans are in hand to improve the provision for ICT. Summing up the school, one parent wrote, 'Every child is given the opportunity to shine and receive the best start to their education'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in ICT by improving the resources and providing more opportunities for children to learn and apply new skills.
- Sharpen up marking and target setting so that the children have a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children start school with levels of skill and knowledge which are about those expected for their age. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and learn quickly. By the time they start in Year 1 most are working at levels that are in advance of those expected, especially in

their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Throughout the school, children are keen learners who work hard and enjoy investigating and exploring new ideas. They make good progress and achieve well. Achievement in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 is outstanding because of the systematic and focused teaching of basic skills. By the end of Year 4 most children are working at levels that are about a year in advance of the standards expected for their age. One reason for successful learning is the stimulating curriculum which provides excellent opportunities for the children to practise and refine their literacy and numeracy skills.

The school has successfully improved standards in English and mathematics over time although children's attainment in ICT is not as high as it should be, especially in word processing. Regardless of their abilities and backgrounds children learn effectively. Those new to the country make rapid gains and quickly adjust to speaking English and they participate fully in all activities. Because of high quality support those with statements of special educational needs make exceptional progress. More able children rise to the challenge and successfully complete demanding work which leads to good success.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The children have excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities, have a love of learning, appreciate the world around them and have much empathy with others. They take a lively interest in different cultures and thoroughly enjoy opportunities such as African drumming and country dancing. Newcomers are welcomed and quickly make friends in the happy atmosphere. Behaviour is exemplary and the children say that there is no bullying or rough play. Boys and girls love caring for others by acting as friendship buddies and helping younger children to learn to read. They are keenly aware of the less fortunate and raise substantial funds for charities.

One parent wrote, 'My children have flourished here'. This is true not only in their academic performance but also in developing healthy and positive attitudes to work and play. One boy said, 'school is great fun and I have lots of friends who make me happy'. Children feel safe and confident, they are willing to have a go at new challenges, work very productively in teams and try their best. These qualities equip them excellently for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Staff are very good at supporting and encouraging the less confident. They plan meticulously to meet the needs of the vulnerable and are expert in providing practical activities which help children to maintain concentration. Staff working with those new to learning English focus strongly on conversation and repetition so that the children quickly grasp the meaning of new words. In an excellent English lesson in Years 1 and 2 there was a real buzz of excitement because the teacher set challenging tasks, had high expectations and used perceptive questions to move learning on. Lessons are well structured and, in the Foundation Stage, sessions provide a balance between child chosen activities and opportunities to work in groups led by the teacher. Good learning habits are formed in the Nursery as children are expected to do their best and receive the support which enables them to succeed. Staff in the Foundation Stage are good at setting

targets which mostly identify the next steps in learning. Marking in Years 1 to 4 is accurate and often includes praise but staff do not make it clear what the children need to do next to improve and to achieve their targets.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

One of the strengths in the Foundation Stage curriculum is the way that staff link the areas of learning so that children's experiences are meaningful and fun. Throughout the school the curriculum has a substantial impact on learning. The programme for personal, social, health and emotional development is threaded through the school's plans and inspires self-confidence. Another strength is the way that basic skills in English and mathematics are used to enhance learning in other subjects. The school provides an excellent mix of activities and the children talk excitedly about their many and varied visits, opportunities to perform in dance, drama and music and to join in sport, especially swimming. These activities contribute much to children's awareness of healthy and safe living. The school provides excellently for those with learning difficulties and other vulnerable groups. Working extensively with parents and outside agencies the staff have developed expertise in supporting children with complex needs. One thankful parent wrote, 'They have worked with my son with incredible patience and have helped him so much'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides high quality care, guidance and support. All procedures to ensure children's safety and well-being are followed robustly. Staff are knowledgeable about the needs of individuals and ensure that children at an early stage of learning English, the vulnerable and those with learning difficulties are given top quality support. One parent, expressing the views of many, said, 'Children trust and believe in their teachers and feel able to talk to them about anything which concerns them'. Excellent pastoral support is enhanced through good assessment procedures which staff use to identify children's academic progress. Detailed assessments of those with learning difficulties contribute much to their learning. The staff keep good records of the children's progress and this is particularly good in the Foundation Stage. The information gives staff an overview of the performance of the children and they use the information well to plan lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

All decisions taken at the school are the result of the focus on improving standards and provision for the children. Leadership and management are good. Children and parents feel that their views are valued and that staff respond to their ideas. The headteacher takes a strong lead and has built a dedicated team who are keen to raise standards by creating an atmosphere in which children feel safe and learn effectively. Everyone is included.

There is regular monitoring of lessons and good support for colleagues new to teaching. Senior staff analyse how well the school is doing and use performance management targets to improve the quality of teaching. This has worked well and resulted in improved standards in writing. The school's plans for improvement are detailed but systems to measure success in implementing

them are underdeveloped. For example, the school has identified the need to improve provision for ICT but mechanisms to check on the success of this initiative are not clear enough. Governors play their part well. They are involved in identifying priorities, monitoring what the school is doing and are very supportive.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

29 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of King's Court First School, Windsor, SL4 2NE

Thank you for making Mr Warner and me so welcome. You are really friendly, helpful and kind. We had a lovely time at your school. We were very pleased with everything we saw and quickly knew that your school is good and some of its work is excellent.

Lots of you said how much you enjoy coming to school. You like your teachers and many of you said how much they care for you and help you to do well. We were very impressed with how sensible you all are and how well you get on with each other. Your behaviour is outstanding and the buddies help to make everyone feel as though they have a friend. It was lovely to see how you make friends with children who have only just come to live in England.

You help to make the school feel special. You have lots of fun and work hard. We were very pleased with how well you write stories and find out interesting facts in science and history. By the time you leave the school almost all of you are good at reading, writing and mathematics. You also talked a lot about the exciting visits and how much you enjoy the extra activities like music, country dancing, sport and cooking. I can still hear the African drums in my head! Your mums, dads and carers said how happy they are that you are looked after so well and learn so much.

Your headteacher and the other staff are good at teaching you new things. They run the school smoothly and, most important of all, they make sure that you are safe, happy and good learners. They are especially good at helping children who sometimes find learning hard. You are good at lots of things but could do even better in using computers and we have asked the teachers to help you to practise more. We have also asked them to give you more guidance on how to improve your work. You can help by continuing to work as hard as possible.

Thank you again for helping to make our visit so interesting. We hope that you will always enjoy school as much as you like coming to King's Court.

Sean O'Toole Lead inspector