



Kentisbury Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113157
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 289528
Inspection date 11 October 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kentisbury
School category	Community		Barnstaple
Age range of pupils	4-11		EX31 4NG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01271 883263
Number on roll (school)	24	Fax number	01271 883263
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Paul Reynolds
		Headteacher	Jayne House
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Kentisbury Primary School is a very small primary school serving a rural area of Devon. The school is going through a period of change and is presently preparing to become part of a federation of three small primary schools. The previous headteacher retired in July 2006 after 26 years and has been replaced by the headteacher-designate of the new school federation. An above-average number of pupils usually leave or join the school each year within term time. All pupils are from a White British heritage and no pupils have a first language other than English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

and gives pupils a sound start to their education. In the short time since her appointment, the headteacher has led the school with drive and determination. She ensures that both staff and governors share the vision of a school which helps pupils to attain their full potential. Her changes have brought about improvements in pupils' attitudes to learning and achievement. These measures have already resulted in rising standards.

Pupils enjoy school and value the school's family atmosphere that provides the firm foundation for their good behaviour. Pupils describe their school as a 'fun' place and say that they feel safe. Parents appreciate that the school offers pupils a 'happy and caring' environment in which to learn, whilst pupils describe their teachers as 'friendly' and 'helpful'. As a result, pupils work hard and try to do well. They display responsible attitudes, have a good community spirit and learn how to make sensible and healthy choices. They learn respect for others and are prepared satisfactorily for their future life.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with average skills. They make good progress and reach or exceed the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 because staff offer good support and make learning interesting. Pupils make sound progress throughout the rest of the school. By Year 6, overall standards are similar to those attained nationally. However, pupils of higher ability do not always do as well as they should. Teaching is satisfactory and ensures that most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress, even though marking does not always tell pupils how to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a range of additional activities that further develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness and understanding of multi-cultural British society are limited. Procedures for care, guidance and support are good and contribute to pupils' progress and their sense of well-being. The governing body supports the school effectively but doesn't always provide enough challenge.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure higher-ability pupils attain their full potential.
- Make sure the governing body develops its role of challenging the school when appropriate.
- Ensure marking helps pupils to understand how to improve their work.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school has worked well to reverse the decline in pupils' achievement in reading over the last year. However, throughout the school, pupils' progress in writing, and in particular the skill of writing for a specific audience, lags behind their progress in other subjects. The school recognises this and has developed various strategies to improve matters, including using the school's good links with other schools to let teachers share their expertise. Pupils' achievement, whilst good in the Foundation Stage, is overall satisfactory and this reflects the quality of teaching. Whilst teaching caters effectively for the needs of most pupils, the work for more-able pupils is sometimes too easy and their progress suffers. Pupils with learning difficulties make at least satisfactory progress in learning because of the effective level of support they receive, both in and out of the classroom.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Attendance is good because pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Their good attitudes, behaviour and relationships contribute to their well-being. They have developed a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit because of, for example, the school's healthy eating initiative and the well-attended out-of-school-hours sports activities. Pupils of all age groups are beginning to make informed choices about how they exercise and what they eat. Pupils have also developed a strong sense of community and work and play well together. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and their spiritual and social development is enhanced through visits, visitors and strong links with organisations such as the National Trust and Kentisbury Church. Residential visits provide older pupils with experiences of life outside their isolated locality. However, during discussions with pupils, it became evident that they have yet to develop a realistic understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern British society

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and provides children with exciting activities that effectively blend independent learning and teacher-directed tasks. Teaching is well organised and children feel safe and secure. As a result they make good progress. Teaching in other year groups is satisfactory. Whilst teachers' sound subject knowledge and variety of teaching approaches help to make lessons interesting and keep pupils attentive, on occasions more-able pupils are insufficiently challenged. This affects their overall progress. Pupils are keen to learn, attentive and work hard but do not

always present their work well. Teachers' marking varies and does not always give pupils an understanding of how to improve their work. Teaching assistants effectively contribute to pupils' learning, especially in the Foundation Stage and when supporting pupils with learning difficulties in Year 1 to Year 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is well balanced and meets the needs and interests of pupils soundly. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are provided with an interesting range of experiences which fully reflects their needs in all areas of learning. As a result they make good progress. Pupils in other year groups make satisfactory progress in building up key skills in subjects such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and this helps them to prepare soundly for the next stage of their education. Good planning and provision for personal, social and health education ensure that pupils are aware of the importance of fitness and well-being. Pupils are encouraged to feel valued as individuals and show respect towards adults and towards each other. Interesting visits and visitors to school increase pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils also have regular opportunities to take part in a range of out-of-school activities, including sports clubs. However, opportunities for pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern British society are limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for care, guidance and support are good and contribute to pupils' progress, sense of well-being and enjoyment of learning. Good quality care is evident in the school's focus on ensuring that every child matters and parents are positive about the good quality of care their children receive. Child protection procedures are understood and followed by all staff and pupils feel safe and know who to approach if they have a problem. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place and the school has established a Single Central Record in line with government requirements. Good induction and transfer arrangements help pupils to settle quickly into new routines and pupils with learning difficulties receive an effective level of support. However, teachers' marking of pupils' work often consists of words of encouragement rather than telling pupils what they need to learn next. As a result pupils are unsure of how to improve and this affects their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The new headteacher is a strong leader. Since her appointment she has developed formal systems to analyse and evaluate provision in order to identify what the school needs to do to improve.

Her new initiatives have already encouraged teachers to make lessons more relevant and this has helped pupils to improve.

Governors have good links with the school and have a sound idea of areas of strength and weakness. They are involved in all major decisions. However, the school's management structures do not clearly set out and separate the roles of staff and governors and, although the governing body is helpful, it isn't sufficiently critical in its support. The school works closely with parents, seeking and taking account of their views regularly. Links with external agencies support pupils' learning well, particularly those with learning difficulties. However, more-able pupils are not fully catered for. Resources are satisfactory and are used efficiently. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. The school presently gives sound value for money and has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

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

Thank you for making me feel very welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed my day at Kentisbury Primary School and especially enjoyed talking to you about your school and seeing you work in lessons.

- Here are some of the things I particularly like about your school:
- I was impressed by how friendly and well behaved you were.
- I was also impressed by the way you played well together in the playground.
- I liked how your new headteacher and teachers take good care of you and work hard to make sure you enjoy coming to school.
- I think your headteacher and teachers can do some things to make your school even better. I have asked them to:
 - Make sure that the more able pupils amongst you do the best they can.
 - Make sure that when teachers mark your work you get an idea of what you have to do to improve.
 - Try to make you more aware of the wider world and the fact that people from different cultures live in modern-day Britain.
 - Make sure that school governors ask more questions about what the school does. You can help your school to get even better by working hard in lessons.

I wish you the very best for the future.