



Kingswood Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115267
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290184
Inspection dates 12–13 October 2006
Reporting inspector Alison Pangbourne

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Clay Hill Road
School category	Foundation		Basildon
Age range of pupils	4–7		Essex SS16 5DE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01268520840
Number on roll (school)	196	Fax number	01268289217
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Alan Pocock
		Headteacher	Mrs Chloe Moran
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–7	12–13 October 2006	290184

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a mixed area with some elements of social disadvantage. Most pupils come from White British families with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds, most of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The attainment of most children on starting in the Nursery is a little below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average as is the proportion eligible to free school meals. The school is oversubscribed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and one described it very accurately as 'a caring community which makes an effort to think of the whole child.' The pupils endorse this, saying, 'Our school is such a colourful place and it makes us feel happy.' The pupils enjoy the exceptional curriculum with its broad range of opportunities to visit interesting places and to meet visitors, who share their knowledge and experiences with them. The excellent termly school newspaper is produced to a very high standard and gives the older pupils opportunities to interview members of the school community and report on a range of topics. This makes writing fun and contributes to the above average standards in this aspect of literacy. There is a wide range of after-school clubs that give pupils the chance to develop many skills and contributes to their enjoyment of school. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They become confident and independent because they are given good care and support. The attention given to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Consequently, pupils have a knowledge and understanding of places and customs both near and far that is unusual for such young children. The excellent emphasis on healthy eating means that pupils happily explain why it is good to eat fruit and vegetables. Pupils play an important part in the running of the school, taking on many responsibilities such as delivering fruit to classes and taking responsibility for the garden. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, are challenged effectively and make good progress. Again, a parent wrote, 'The school gives excellent support to children with special needs.' Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes so most of them reach the expected standard by the beginning of Year 1. In recent years, standards have generally been above average by the end of Year 2. In 2003, standards began to fall and, by 2005, were close to average overall, with mathematics being below average. The new headteacher swiftly introduced several initiatives which halted the decline successfully and in 2006, standards overall were above average, with a significant improvement in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is good. The headteacher identified that the more able pupils should do better and, as a result of improved provision, a higher proportion of pupils exceeded the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in 2006. However, the proportion of pupils who exceeded the expected level in mathematics was lower than the national average. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good, activities are well matched to their needs and questions are used effectively to make them think. Much useful information is collected about pupils attainment but it is only recently that this data has been used to track progress or to set targets to help pupils improve further. Leadership and management are good. The driving force behind the way that the school is now powering forward is the excellent leadership of the new headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and staff. Senior staff have an accurate view of the school. All are committed to ensuring the highest possible standards in all aspects of the school. Consequently, many new developments such as new ways of teaching mathematics, extra support for higher attaining pupils, new methods of tracking how well pupils are doing and the setting of targets for individuals are already bearing fruit.

This shows that the school has good capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Year 2 even further by increasing the proportion of pupils who exceed the expected levels, particularly in mathematics. - Use assessment information more effectively to track how well pupils are doing and to set individual targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they are taught well and there are interesting things to do. Consequently, most reach the goals expected for their age by the beginning of Year 1. Pupils' achievement is good through Years 1 and 2 and this is reflected in Year 2 assessments in 2006, where standards rose significantly from 2005. Standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils exceeded the expected level in 2006, but there is room to further improve this, particularly in mathematics. Good standards of work were also seen in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school promotes kindness and good relationships through weekly 'friendship awards' to recipients suggested by the pupils. Their behaviour is excellent and they are attentive during lessons. They speak confidently and say that they enjoy school greatly because they like learning through games and using computers. They develop an excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through the caring ethos and the outstanding opportunities to learn about other cultures, such as Papua New Guinea. They make an excellent contribution to the school, for example by growing vegetables in the garden, and accept a wide range of responsibilities. They have an exceptional understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, making good meal choices. When asked why he had chosen fruit for dessert, one little boy quipped 'because it is good for you!' Pupils' basic skills are good and they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Their attendance is only satisfactory despite the school's best efforts to improve it.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use questions well to include all pupils and develop their understanding. They have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set for them. Teachers clearly explain what pupils are to learn and give precise instructions. However, in their quest to encourage higher attainers to read and follow instructions for themselves, staff do not always check that they have fully understood the task before starting. This means that pupils sometimes misinterpret the task. Good assessment means that staff have a lot of information about each pupil but using this data to set targets and to track progress has only recently started. As a result, pupils are not totally secure about what they need to do to improve and, in the past, some pupils, particularly higher attainers, were not sufficiently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum greatly enhances pupils' personal development. It is extremely well-planned with a strong emphasis on race equality which increases pupils' knowledge of other religions and cultures. The wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities, including sports, gardening and country dancing, contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning. The school's excellent partnerships with other agencies help to provide pupils with a rich range of unusual enrichment opportunities, such as newspaper editing and film making. The curriculum promotes healthy lifestyles effectively and the school has achieved 'Healthy Schools' status. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is excellent and the school has begun to develop its provision for pupils who are gifted or talented.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's welcoming ethos means that pupils and parents feel valued. The youngest children are helped to settle very quickly. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and staff are well trained. Since last year, the school has developed a system for tracking pupils' progress through the school but this is at an early stage. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive good care and support, and make good progress. The overwhelming majority of parents are very positive about the school and many support its work as volunteers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The outstanding leadership by the headteacher is fundamental to the school's success. There is a strong sense of team spirit amongst teachers, support staff and governors. All staff fulfil their developing management roles effectively, having a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. Since her appointment, the headteacher has introduced several new initiatives to enhance provision. She quickly identified areas where standards were slowly falling and put in measures successfully to halt the decline. Staff are enthusiastic about the new developments and this also contributes to the rising standards. The governors support the school well. They question new initiatives but several are newly appointed and opportunities for them to find out at first hand how the school is doing are underdeveloped.

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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	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	2
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

16 October 2006 Dear Children Kingswood Infant School, Clay Hill Road, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5DE Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. We would like to tell you what we liked best. We thought that your behaviour was excellent and that you played very nicely with your friends. We were impressed by what you know about lots of other countries and customs. We enjoyed having lunch with you and it was good to see how you chose healthy things to eat. You go to lots of interesting places and do exciting things. We especially enjoyed reading the newspaper that you produce. All the grown ups look after you well and help you to learn. If you find learning hard or are just learning to speak English you get lots of help. Your families know that you go to a good school. We have asked your teachers to help more of you to do really well, especially those of you who find it quite easy to learn. You can all help by continuing to try as hard as you can to do your best. We have also asked your teachers to tell you what you need to do to get even better. We hope you carry on enjoying your time at Kingswood Infant School and do well in your next school. Best wishes Alison Pangbourne Lead inspector