



Kingsway Infants' School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117317
Local Authority HERTFORDSHIRE
Inspection number 290796
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Sheelagh Barnes

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	North Approach
School category	Community		Watford
Age range of pupils	4–7		Hertfordshire WD25 0ES
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01923 675005
Number on roll (school)	147	Fax number	01923 675005
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Peter Pearce
		Headteacher	Ms D Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsway is a smaller than average infant school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also average. There is a greater proportion of pupils than nationally who speak English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post for two years. The deputy headteacher and two other teachers have been appointed recently.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its overall effectiveness. Children get a good start to their education in the Reception classes. Throughout the school progress and achievement are satisfactory. Standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Pupils' personal development is good and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils behave well and are encouraged to develop into caring and considerate members of society. They make a sound contribution to their community. Pupils enjoy lessons and are generally keen to come to school. Attendance is satisfactory and is monitored effectively by the school. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciative of its work although a small minority would like more opportunity to express their views.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are hard working and caring. They set challenging targets for pupils with reference to their ages. However, not all pupils know the class targets and they are rarely set individual targets based upon how well they have succeeded in previous work. Teachers use their knowledge of the whole class when planning lessons but do not always plan activities to enable different groups to make the best progress. Assessment is satisfactory. The school has made assessment more rigorous and accurate, but some is still difficult to use to get a quick overview. The quality of marking is variable. While there are examples of good marking, particularly in Reception, elsewhere marking is often too brief to inform pupils, parents and other adults what needs to be improved. The curriculum is good with a good range of interesting and exciting extra activities. Provision for pupils' care and welfare is satisfactory, with good attention paid to health and safety issues.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Some subject leaders are experienced in monitoring and reviewing the quality of pupils' work and of teaching but others are new to this role. The headteacher has a good knowledge of the school and a determination to raise standards further. The leadership team has produced an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Standards are improving and the school has a good capacity to improve further. The headteacher and governors have improved the building and are creating an attractive and secure learning environment. Governors are supportive of the school and suitably involved in evaluation and development planning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics by planning lessons which match the needs of pupils of differing abilities more accurately.
- Improve target setting so that pupils and their parents know what their next challenge is, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Use marking more consistently in all classes so that it is clear to pupils and to adults reading their books what they have done well and what they need to improve.
- Develop the role of some subject leaders in monitoring and developing their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry varies from year to year due to the small size of some year groups, but is average overall for the current Reception children. Children settle well into the two Reception classes and make good gains in their learning, due to the good quality of the provision. Progress continues steadily in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are generally in line with those expected for pupils' ages by the end of Year 2. This is an improvement, as in the recent past, standards in mathematics, reading and writing were below average. Pupils from all groups, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are achieving satisfactorily, in line with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well in lessons and around the school, work hard and maintain high levels of concentration. They are fully aware of procedures to follow in the rare event of a dispute. 'Playground buddies' play their part in ensuring the playground is a safe and secure environment. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are integrated fully so that they, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, take part in all aspects of school life. Most pupils enjoy being in school, their attendance is close to the national average and most pupils come to school on time

Pupils have sound opportunities to contribute to life in the community. They raise money for charities and present concerts for parents and friends. Through their representative on the school council, pupils have a say in how the school is run. This stands them in good stead for the future. Pupils understand the need to stay safe and the value of adopting a healthy lifestyle. This is supported by the provision of fresh fruit at break time, healthy options for mid-day meals and additional physical activities arranged at lunchtime and after school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school emphasises the spiritual and cultural aspects of pupils' growth through an understanding of Christianity, together with the teachings of other faiths. Moral and social issues are taught well and have had a good effect on helping pupils to understand justice and respect. The school rightly recognises that further consideration of multi-cultural issues is an on-going development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It leads to pupils making satisfactory gains in their learning and achieving standards in line with those expected for their age. Teachers are hard working and have good relationships with pupils and with other

adults. Teaching in the Reception classes is good and leads to children in these classes making good gains in their learning. This is particularly the case with regard to children's personal, social and emotional development. Marking and assessment is good in Reception, but satisfactory in the rest of the school. Class targets are set, but not all pupils know these and they are rarely set individual targets based upon how well they have succeeded in previous work. Teachers use their knowledge of the whole class when planning lessons but do not always plan activities based on how well individual pupils have succeeded with previous tasks.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and provides children with a good start to their education. Elsewhere the curriculum is broad, balanced and gives a good emphasis to different subjects, including Spanish and extra-curricular French, together with a programme for the development of skills. There is a good number of trips to places of interest and visitors are invited in to the school to broaden the pupils' views of community and of national issues. The school is successful in developing pupils' awareness of safe and healthy living through its lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Displays around the school celebrate achievements in many subjects. A good range of extra-curricular activities also develops pupils' language, physical and social skills. Resources including laptops and interactive white boards are used well to teach skills in information and communication technology.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. Pupils are cared for sensitively in a very welcoming and friendly environment. They have confidence in their teachers and enjoy all aspects of school life. There are secure arrangements for child protection. Thorough risk assessments are carried out and all staff are made aware of their responsibility to ensure high levels of safety and promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good start in the Reception classes because of the careful induction arrangements. The school has begun to develop a more rigorous and efficient system to check on how much progress pupils make in English and mathematics. However, the pupils receive insufficient guidance on exactly what they should do to reach the next stages in their learning. Parents are given regular opportunities to meet the staff and to receive progress reports, although these do not always indicate how help can be given at home. The school uses classroom assistants well to support pupils with learning difficulties. As a result of careful testing, tracking and encouragement these pupils make satisfactory progress. The provision for pupils who are gifted or talented is undeveloped and has little impact on teachers' planning for lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together with the deputy headteacher, she has developed a sensible plan to improve standards.

Leadership and management of individual subjects are satisfactory. Some leaders are new to their post and not all are yet adept at analysing information in their subjects or contributing to whole school evaluation and development planning. Governors are strong supporters of the school and are well informed. However, the governing body has difficulty in recruiting new members and currently has a number of vacancies. This increases the workload on individual members. Financial management is satisfactory. Resources are deployed appropriately and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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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	2
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	3
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

9th November 2006

Dear Children,

Kingsway Infant School, North Approach, Watford, Hertfordshire.

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you.

What we liked most about your school

- When you start in the Reception classes you are helped to settle into school well so that you quickly learn to enjoy school
- You behave well and learn to take care of others and think about other people's feelings
- You learn about a lot of interesting things
- Your teachers work hard and you enjoy being here
- You learn how to stay safe and healthy.

What we have asked your teachers to do now

- Help you to improve the quality of your reading, writing and number work by finding out more about how well each one of you is getting on
- Take care, when marking your work, to tell you what you did well and what you can do to improve
- Set individual targets for you and to tell you and your parents what you need to do next.

We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely Mrs Barnes and Mr Gilbert