

Kewstoke Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109092
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	309876
Inspection date	3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenden Shepherd
Headteacher	Arvin Nairn
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Kewstoke Road Kewstoke Weston-super-Mare BS22 9YF
Telephone number	01934 623430
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kewstoke Primary School is smaller than average. Whilst it has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, very few require high levels of support. All pupils speak English as their first language and almost all are White-British. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Eco Schools awards. The headteacher joined the school in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Kewstoke Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher has begun to put her stamp on the school and there are numerous areas where improvements are under way. These reforms are starting to improve pupils' progress but have not yet had a positive impact on their long-term achievement and standards. There are some year-on-year variations, but the general pattern is that children enter the school with the expected level of skills for their age and leave Year 6 with average standards. This means that their achievement is satisfactory.

Parents are generally happy with the school. Many believe the headteacher has made a significant difference to the school since her appointment and find the staff open and approachable. One typical comment was, 'I'm pleased that they teach the same values that I have, for example a team at sports day received an award for good behaviour and team work.'

Teaching and the curriculum have both been reformed under the school's new leadership. The curriculum is now good and pupils are excited by the varied and interesting opportunities it offers. They appreciate the many after school clubs and large numbers of pupils of all ages participate. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers use assessment information more comprehensively in planning and delivering lessons and in providing more effective support for pupils. Lessons are usually well structured and have a clear focus for learning. However, teaching is inconsistent and can lack challenge. Some lessons are overly dominated by the teacher and pupils are not given enough opportunities to work independently.

Pupils are correctly confident they are well cared for. They often enjoy individualised care. The older ones in particular, receive effective academic guidance, but this is not universal. Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is good and pupils work together well in lessons and look after one another when outside. The school provides plenty of opportunities for exercise and great encouragement to eat well. Most pupils take up these chances enthusiastically and know what it takes to grow into healthy adults. Academic guidance and support are satisfactory, as, although older pupils know their targets, younger pupils are not always sure of how they can improve their work.

The headteacher knows the school intimately and has begun to get to grips with its weaknesses. Her clear insights and very effective planning have improved provision across the school and this is starting to provide better chances for pupils. Staff have been empowered to be more proactive in managing their areas of responsibility. Helped by good professional development opportunities, they are developing their skills, although their current influence is limited. The Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving, benefiting from new developments. The headteacher enjoys growing support from governors and staff, who work effectively as a close-knit team.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Recent improvements have promoted better teaching and learning, so that sessions are more engaging, there is more accurate assessment and a more appropriate curriculum and children's achievement is currently satisfactory. Children's skills as they start school fluctuate, but are generally at the expected levels. As they move into Year 1, they are adequately prepared for

school life and standards are average. Teaching has begun to use the outside areas to promote improved learning but does not offer enough opportunities for children to learn independently.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards and achievement by ensuring teaching is more challenging and offers more opportunities for pupils to develop independence of learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring of middle managers, so that teaching and learning are more consistent.
- Improve academic guidance, so that pupils, particularly younger ones, know clearly what their next steps in learning should be.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's skills, knowledge and understanding are similar to expectations for their age when they start school. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most reach average standards, although they are a little lower in communication, language and literacy. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are close to the national average, including English. This represents satisfactory achievement across the school. However, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because effective support, pitched at the right level, helps them to move on more quickly.

The school recognises that lower standards and achievement since the previous inspection are largely due to weaknesses in teaching and assessment. Despite lower standards, strengths remain in mathematics for pupils in Key Stage 1. Thorough tracking and teacher assessment demonstrate that pupils currently in Year 2 have achieved well over the year. Pupils in Year 6 have also made good progress this year, but their achievement over the whole of Key Stage 2 is only satisfactory because of their poor progress in earlier years. Newly introduced policies and procedures, such as assessment for learning, are showing clear signs of raising standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school because they have fun with their learning and relish the opportunities offered by the curriculum. Behaviour is good. Disruption to lessons is unusual and pupils respond positively to the school's 'Good to be Green' policy of rewarding good behaviour. Bullying is rare and the school deals with such incidents rigorously. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; extensive curricular opportunities mean their multicultural understanding is very good.

Pupils know how to stay safe and avoid potential dangers, helped by the school's effective programme of personal, social and health education and visitors such as the police. Attendance is average but, despite the school's best efforts, some parents take too many term-time holidays.

Pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are good. They act as 'buddies' to those in need and participate sensibly in the well-respected school council. The school has good links with the local community and pupils take part in local events. They also raise money

for more distant partners, such as an orphanage in Thailand. Pupils make steady progress in literacy, numeracy and computer skills. They work well together but do not readily take the initiative in their learning; their development of skills for future economic well-being is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is some good teaching but not enough to ensure consistently good progress in all classes. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults and one another and are encouraged to respond to questions using a partner and to work together to record their thinking on mini whiteboards. Teaching and learning are particularly good when pupils are fully involved in lessons, as observed in a literacy lesson in the Years 5 and 6 class, when pupils were challenged to find out about famous people. However, not all learning moves on quickly enough. At times pupils sit listening to the teacher for too long and are afforded too few opportunities to work independently.

The school recognises that teaching sometimes lacks challenge for pupils, including the more able, and teaching approaches have begun to be adapted to improve achievement. Teachers deploy assistants well, ensuring that pupils who have difficulties are well supported. The school uses its new range of assessment procedures well to plan work and set targets for pupils in English and mathematics. The new marking policy is inconsistently applied. This means that some pupils are aware of when they have done well but do not know enough about how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and relevant with a good emphasis on pupils' personal development and well-being. The many visits outside school and various links with schools in other countries broaden pupils' experiences and enhance their social and cultural development.

Staff have worked hard to redesign the curriculum so that it links subjects together and is more interesting. Pupils report that they enjoy this new approach to topic work. Their literacy, numeracy and computer skills are strengthened through authentic opportunities to apply learning in different contexts. The school runs programmes for gifted and talented pupils after school in collaboration with parents.

A good range of after school clubs helps pupils develop their skills. Learning is enriched by good outdoor facilities, such as the 'fort', which are creatively integrated within the limited space. However, cramped accommodation places some limitations on physical education activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and are confident that adults in the school can sort out any difficulties. Systems to secure their welfare are robust and effectively administered. The positive ethos and good relationships in the school promote pupils' good personal development. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is thorough and well organised so they achieve

well. The school works effectively in partnership with parents and outside agencies to secure extra help when required.

Older pupils have a good grasp of their standards and know how they should improve their work. They know their targets well. However, younger ones have more generalised objectives and so are less aware of the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has had a very positive impact on the school since her appointment. She quickly identified areas for improvement and moved rapidly to implement reforms.

In the last 18 months there have been marked improvements in the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning, the curriculum, the use of assessment and leadership and management. Improved partnerships with schools and businesses near and far have been educationally and financially beneficial. The influence of these reforms on provision is clear; on achievement, improvements are only just starting to become evident.

Very good planning for the future correctly identifies priorities for improvement and implements effective strategies to address them. Careful monitoring checks that these reforms are working and will meet deadlines. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Based on its recent track record, capacity for involvement in the future is also satisfactory.

The governing body has had a new lease of life under the current headteacher. Governors now monitor the school's effectiveness regularly and clearly understand its strengths and weaknesses. They use this information well, providing a good balance of support and challenge.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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.

Annex A

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

4 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kewstoke Primary School, Kewstoke, BS22 9YF

Thank you for your help during the recent visit of the inspectors to your school. We enjoyed meeting and chatting to you. Kewstoke provides a satisfactory education at the moment but, led by your headteacher, it is working hard to improve and there are many signs that things are getting better.

The standards you reach by the time you leave school are similar to other schools across the country and your achievement is satisfactory, but it is improving. Teaching is satisfactory but getting better and this is starting to improve your learning. However, some lessons do not stretch you enough or give you enough chances to work on your own. The mix of subjects you study (called the curriculum) is good and you told us that you find many of the topics you study very interesting.

You are well cared for and know there is always a friendly face you can turn to if you need any help. This means that your personal development is good. Kewstoke is a happy place and you enjoy school and behave well. You know a lot about how to live healthily. The headteacher has done a lot since she joined the school and has good support from staff and governors. Because achievement is slow to improve, leadership and management are satisfactory.

Most schools have room for improvement. We have asked the school to concentrate on three important things:

- Raise standards and improve achievement by improving teaching so that it is more interesting; you can help by working as hard as you can.
- Make sure more teachers check up on the school, so that teaching improves.
- Improve the advice you are given so that you know what to do to make your work better.

Once again, thanks for all your help. It was very nice meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan Lead inspector