

Kingsmoor Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109507
Local Authority	BEDFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310011
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Cosway

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alex Vickers
Headteacher	Mr John Meaney
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2004
School address	Kingsmoor Close Flitwick Bedfordshire MK45 1EY
Telephone number	01525 712448
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsmoor Lower School is close to average in size. The school population represents a mix of social backgrounds. Pupils are mainly of White British origin. Attainment on entry is close to average, overall. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is also below the national average and there are no pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is in line with the average nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be good, and the inspection confirms this. Some aspects of the school's work are outstanding. The quality of teaching, support and leadership in the school leads to pupils making good progress in their work and achieving well.

A significant strength of the school is the positive attitudes it fosters in pupils. They love coming to school and learning, which is one reason why attendance is above average. A particular success is the way in which boys are motivated to succeed. A culture has been created over time in which it is 'cool' to work well and try hard in class. The behaviour of both boys and girls is excellent in class and around school.

The attainment of most pupils is average on entry. They attain the standards expected for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage. At the end of Year 2, standards are above the national averages with all pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in the national tests in English and mathematics in 2007, and some exceeding this. Standards have risen every year for the last three years. Pupils continue to achieve well through the rest of the school, so that attainment is above average overall at the end of Year 4, and well above average in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have interesting and challenging lessons and this leads to them concentrating and working hard in class. Teachers plan work that is matched to their needs and use praise well to encourage them. This gives pupils the confidence to succeed. The curriculum is good, with excellent coverage of literacy and numeracy, but it offers few enrichment activities. Very effective care and support systems ensure all have equal chances to succeed. Almost all parents appreciate the levels of care and commitment. They believe that their children are making very good progress at school because the teaching is so good: 'Excellent school, great teaching'. Good health education ensures pupils understand how to lead healthy lives. They have outstanding preparation for their future from the many opportunities to work collaboratively and to take responsibility for their learning. They make excellent contributions to the local community and run an effective school council. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' management of their classes is excellent and they use a wide range of techniques to make learning varied and interesting. Pupils' academic progress is tracked well, but assessment information is not used consistently across the school to help pupils to improve their work. Not all teachers give enough written guidance to pupils on the next steps in their learning. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding and leadership overall is good. Governors are effective, the school is well managed and it runs smoothly. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is led well. The good teaching in the Reception Year is based on a very secure knowledge of the needs of the children. Appropriate teaching approaches ensure that children make good progress in literacy, numeracy and the development of social skills. Good emphasis on personal development ensures that they are confident learners, able to listen, concentrate on a task and work collaboratively. As a result, they develop a love of learning and achieve well. Almost all attain the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year

1. The curriculum is good and provides an extensive range of activities. However, currently there is limited opportunity for outside creativity and learning for these very young children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers tell pupils what they need to do to raise the level of their work and set them specific, short-term targets.
- Introduce more enrichment activities into the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The progress made by pupils in Years 1 to 4 has improved. This has been successfully achieved by organising pupils into teaching groups where work is planned to match their specific ability levels. Both achievement and attainment have risen year on year for the last three years and the 2007 results were the best ever for the school. All pupils, including gifted children and those with learning difficulties or disabilities, make good progress. Results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 have been above the national average in recent years. All pupils reach at least the expected levels for their age. In Year 4, standards are currently above average overall and are well above average in mathematics because of good teaching. Attainment on entry is average, so pupils have achieved well to reach above average standards by the end of their time in this school.

In 2006, the school reached all of its challenging targets for Year 2 pupils. The equally challenging targets for 2007 were exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. Their outstanding spiritual, moral and social development is fostered by the caring and supportive ethos of the school and the opportunities to learn in a nurturing environment. Pupils show good understanding of healthy lifestyles and flourish in the school's safe and secure environment. They adopt safe practices very well. They enjoy coming to school immensely and are very pleased and proud to be part of the school community. Attendance is good and is pro-actively encouraged by the school through positive rewards and strategies. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and is taught and modelled from the Foundation Stage upwards. Relationships at the school are excellent and pupils relate very well both to each other and to staff in a mature and caring way. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school community and beyond. They carry out monitoring tasks effectively and conscientiously, and link to the community outside by, for example, singing in the local old people's home. They are involved in the running of the school through the school council where they learn to share their views very effectively. Overall, pupils develop good basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and develop the personal qualities they will need to be successful in future very well indeed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good or better and this is a significant reason why pupils make good progress through the school. Teachers work together as a team, planning collaboratively,

sometimes exchanging classes and always learning from each other. Their enthusiasm and motivation helps to enthuse the pupils and develop a love of learning. Teachers throughout the school plan and manage lessons exceptionally well, creating positive learning environments in which high quality work from the pupils is encouraged and celebrated. ICT is used exceptionally well to make teaching and learning interesting and stimulating. Teachers engage pupils well in their learning through skilful questioning and the many opportunities for discussion. Pupils are strongly encouraged to solve problems and to think for themselves, and those with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well by teaching assistants. Teachers do not sufficiently assess short-term progress through individual targets for pupils based on what they need to do to raise the standard of their work. Some teachers make useful suggestions to pupils when they mark work, but these are too easy to forget, whilst their written targets are too general to be helpful.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The lively and interesting curriculum promotes good achievement and personal development. The school has notable curriculum strengths in the core subjects of mathematics and English. The system of moving pupils out of their classes to be regrouped into classes that reflect their abilities works very effectively. ICT is also strength of the school and the custom-built ICT suite is very well used and much appreciated by the children. In addition to the statutory curriculum, there is a number of after school clubs, which motivate pupils and broaden their skills and interests. Particularly popular are the African drumming sessions and sports clubs, although there are relatively few visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. The school's theme days successfully motivate pupils and provide useful links between subjects, but these are not a regular, planned feature of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes the safety and welfare of its pupils very seriously and has the required safeguarding and child protection procedures and policies securely in place. Risk assessments are undertaken and children know who to go to if they have a problem. The needs of pupils who are vulnerable or who have difficulties with their learning or behaviour are carefully identified and provided for. They receive excellent support in several ways from experienced support staff. Productive links with a wide range of agencies support pupils with learning difficulties. The school positively encourages good attendance and works hard to ensure that all children can achieve well and enjoy learning. Many aspects of pastoral care and guidance are excellent but aspects of academic guidance are not fully developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Many parents consider that the headteacher is the key to the school's success. He has successfully developed a sense of teamwork and purpose through the school, supported by a good, effective leadership team. Together, they have a very good understanding of their school, have correctly identified areas for improvement and made a significant difference both to the quality of teaching and to the learning environment. A good climate has been created in which all pupils understand how to behave and come to school prepared to work and gain enjoyment

from achieving well. The headteacher has supported governor development well and this has resulted in good levels of challenge from well-informed governors. He has developed the subject leaders' responsibility for leading and monitoring subjects, so that they now lead their areas well. Consequently, overall leadership and management are good.

The school's view of its own effectiveness is accurate. There has been good progress in the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report, including the induction arrangements for Foundation Stage children, which are now good. Over the last three years, initiatives carried through by the leadership team, with strong support from all staff, have steadily and consistently raised standards. The school is, therefore, well placed to continue 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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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

28 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kingsmoor Lower School, Flitwick, MK45 1EY

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we visited your school. You all told us that you like your school. We were impressed with how helpful and kind you are to each other, so that the school feels like one large family. We enjoyed the lessons that we shared with you and saw how well you work. These are some more of the good things about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you work hard.
- You reach good standards in reading, writing and numeracy.
- You learn how to work with others, care for others and live healthy lives.
- Teachers make lessons enjoyable.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and all adults care for you well.
- The headteacher and other staff lead and manage the school well and are doing many things to make it even better for you.

We have suggested to your school some things that we think will bring about even more improvement.

- When teachers mark your work, they give you mini-targets so that you know how to make your work better, step-by-step, to reach the next level.
- The school organises more visits, creative activities and theme days to make your time at school even more interesting and exciting.

Work hard, come to school every day and make the most of your time at this lovely school!

Paul Cosway

Lead inspector