

Kettlefields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110771
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310415
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Nichola Perry

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	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Blois
Headteacher	Miss Carol Meek
Date of previous school inspection	7 April 2003
School address	Stetchworth Road Dullingham Newmarket Suffolk CB8 9UH
Telephone number	01638 508360
Fax number	01638 508445

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kettlefields is a very popular, smaller than average, rural primary school. Children's knowledge and skills on entry to the school are generally as expected nationally. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds or have English as a second language. The proportion of pupils eligible to free school meals is well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to the national average. The school has a number of awards, including Healthy Schools, Sports Mark, Active Mark and an RSPCA award.

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. It has some outstanding features in important areas. The new headteacher has made a good start and the governors are very supportive in sharing her vision for developing the school. She has an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Leadership and management is good overall and subject leaders are knowledgeable about aspects of their subjects. However, they are not fully equipped with the necessary skills to evaluate accurately their impact on pupils' learning and so improve it more rapidly. Since its last inspection the school has improved well and maintained its popularity with parents. They overwhelmingly say that the staff care extremely well for their children and enable them to achieve well. A parent summed up the views of many: '...a fantastic school where I have seen my child bloom...the staff know the children and work with them to bring out the best in them.' The school is well placed to improve further and provides good value for money.

Outstanding systems of pastoral care and support contribute strongly to the excellent personal development of pupils. Pupils behave well and act as good representatives of the school. They develop into confident, friendly and positive individuals who thoroughly enjoy coming to school, reflected in above average attendance. Pupils make a significant contribution to the school in many ways, but particularly through the active school council, which offers very good opportunities to share pupils' views and learn about democracy. Support for vulnerable pupils and their families is excellent and is fostered through strong links with parents and the local community, so that any barriers to learning are effectively overcome.

Pupils are very enthusiastic and achieve well. They make good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science across the school. Targeted support for pupils who require additional help and the excellent emphasis on developing social and emotional skills, in addition to literacy and numeracy, are contributing strongly to the good standards in all age groups. Academic guidance is good overall. Teachers' marking is positive and good systems have been introduced to ensure pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own learning. Staff track pupils' progress in key subjects, but the systems for doing this are still too new to see the full effect on pupils' learning.

Pupils of all abilities are taught well, with some practices that are outstanding. Daily assessments are accurate and teachers increasingly use this information to support effective planning, which meets the needs of individual pupils. Curriculum provision is good and effective teaching methods ensure that pupils are highly motivated and actively engaged in lessons. The range of enrichment experiences provided to enhance pupils' learning is exemplary and highly valued by pupils. The school is particularly successful in promoting the need for healthy lifestyles so that pupils have an excellent understanding of this and of the need to be safe.

A few parents expressed concerns about a recent increase in bad behaviour and bullying. This was investigated fully during the inspection. No evidence was found to support this view, either in lessons, around the school, or during break and lunchtimes. Pupils themselves consider that behaviour is good, with a few exceptions, and that bullying is rare with swift action taken by staff to manage any incidents.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and contributes strongly to ensuring children develop good basic skills. The Foundation Stage leader has developed accurate assessment skills and good systems for tracking pupils' progress. The curriculum is planned effectively with many opportunities to develop imaginative and structured play, including outdoor play. The school has good plans to develop the outdoor area into a dedicated space for the younger children. There is a strong emphasis on teaching language, communication, social and problem-solving skills. As a result, children achieve well and standards are above those expected by the time they enter Year 1. Relationships are excellent and children settle happily and quickly. Parents are very pleased with what the school offers their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the roles of subject leaders so that they can evaluate more accurately their impact on pupils' learning.
- Ensure procedures for checking pupils' progress are refined and embedded thoroughly to provide better quality information to maximise the impact on pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From their starting points to the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on their good start in the Foundation Stage so that standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are above those expected nationally, representing good achievement. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6 so that standards reached by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are also above the national averages. Recent assessments and records of current pupils' progress confirm that pupils are securely on track to reach the challenging targets set for all subjects. Additional support for pupils who find learning difficult ensures that they too make good progress and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding because the curriculum provides very well for this aspect of their learning and staff care passionately about the pupils. Behaviour is good and bullying and racism are rare. Those who occasionally disrupt learning quickly improve due to the high quality of care they receive. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. They feel safe and are extremely well prepared to cope with risks in the wider community, achieving high standards in cycle proficiency tests. They have a good awareness of the risks from tobacco and other substances. Pupils really love coming to school because lessons are enjoyable and playtimes are valuable opportunities to be with friends. Attendance is above average and the school monitors this carefully. Pupils make a very strong contribution to school life, proudly taking on responsibilities such as playtime buddies or managing the school office at lunchtimes. As a result, together with good basic skills, they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school's partnership with parents promotes a strong sense of community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good across the school with some outstanding features evident in some lessons. Pupils learn well because they feel secure and well supported in class. There are frequent good examples of feedback to pupils so that they are confident about their learning. Teachers have a clear understanding of what needs to be learned, which they share with pupils. There is a close match of the curriculum to pupils' needs and lessons are generally planned to cater for the range of ability in each class. Behaviour is managed well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to provide good support for individuals. Classrooms are lively and stimulating. Interactive whiteboards are used well in lessons to engage and interest pupils. Teachers are becoming skilled at assessing and tracking pupils' progress although this aspect of their work is not yet fully embedded.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum focuses strongly on developing basic skills in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding. There are exciting topic days when aspects of life, for example in Roman Britain, bring learning alive for the pupils. Good plans exist to extend this creative approach to better integrate basic skills with other subjects to meet the needs of learners even better. The wide ranges of after-school clubs, with strong emphasis on sporting and musical opportunities are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Pupils' personal development and well-being is exceptionally well provided for through the strong emphasis on personal, social and health education. Good progress is being made towards introducing French for older pupils through co-operation with neighbouring schools. Resourcing for ICT has improved greatly with interactive whiteboards throughout and a bank of laptops to supplement classroom computers. The curriculum meets the needs of those who need extra support with their learning well. However, some planning in key subjects does not always take sufficient account of the needs of more able learners.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff care deeply for pupils, resulting in outstanding pastoral care and support systems which ensure that pupils feel well looked-after and safe at all times. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet requirements. Clear guidance contributes strongly to pupils' excellent understanding of how to keep safe in a range of situations. Provision for the range of additional needs of a few pupils and their families is very effective. Communication and liaison with parents is excellent. The school's efforts have greatly contributed to pupils' enjoyment of school and their general well-being. Parents very much appreciate the care their children receive. Individual needs are identified early and additional support is provided to help pupils achieve well. Through close involvement with external agencies, pupils make good progress towards their targets. Academic guidance for pupils is good. Marking is regular and supportive and some of it helps pupils understand how to improve their work. However, this is not consistent across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher is building well on the school's successes. She has a very clear strategic vision for ongoing improvement and is ambitious for the school, its pupils and staff. One of her first priorities has been to establish a new system for more accurate tracking of pupils' progress. Subject leaders are beginning to develop a more sophisticated understanding of how well pupils are doing. The senior leadership team is developing its role, with further training planned to enable them to check standards and the quality of provision even more rigorously. The school is effective in identifying key areas for development and self evaluation is accurate. The improvement plan is an effective working document. There are high expectations of what staff and pupils can achieve and school targets are challenging. Management is good and the school functions well on a daily basis. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's qualities and support its development well.

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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?	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	1
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	2
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?	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	3
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

13 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kettlefields Primary School, Newmarket, CB8 9UH

Thank you all for making us feel welcome during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed seeing how well you learn and can see why you enjoy coming to school so very much. Special thanks go to the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk to us. You told us lots about your school and were very helpful to the inspection team. Mr Perkins thoroughly enjoyed your special assembly and Miss Meek was very disappointed to have to miss it because she had to meet with me!

We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school and that your new headteacher is doing a good job. The school is helping you develop into super young people. Your behaviour is good and the school is a calm and happy place of learning. You make good progress in your learning and attain good standards. Well done!

You told us that you enjoy school very much and feel very safe and secure because the teachers solve any incidents or unkindness. You think the behaviour systems are fair, that nearly all pupils are consistently well behaved and that there is very little bullying in school. We think that your headteacher and staff care for you extremely well, provide you with good support and keep an eye on the progress you are making.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to do two things to make your school even better:

- make sure all the staff know how they can best help you to improve your work and make the school even better
- make sure that the new systems for checking your progress help you to learn better so that more of you reach even higher standards in your work in literacy, numeracy and science.

Keep working hard at the many things you enjoy doing at school and we wish you every success in the future.

Best wishes

Nichola Perry

Lead inspector