

# Katherines Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115245
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311885
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheelagh Barnes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graeme Dykes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Suzanne Ryan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Brookside Harlow Essex CM19 5NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279421495
<b>Fax number</b>	01279416042

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. There are fewer pupils than at the time of the previous inspection. The great majority are from White British backgrounds. Fewer pupils than nationally speak English as an additional language, have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are known to be eligible for free school meals. Whilst on entry to the school, attainment covers the full normal range, overall children are working at levels below those expected for their ages, particularly in early reading, writing and mathematical skills and personal development. The school has the Healthy Schools and the Active Mark Sports awards as well as the local Heartbeat recognition for healthy diets.

## 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 that provides a good education for the pupils who attend and good value for money. It is effectively led and there has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The school is well-placed to continue to improve. The driving force of the school is in the very effective leadership of the head teacher. Monitoring of standards across the school is rigorous and information gathered is used well to plan improvements.

The curriculum is good overall and provides pupils with a wide range of interesting and exciting activities, both in and outside lessons. However, there is scope to improve the balance. On occasion too much emphasis is placed on imparting information, rather than developing skills in subjects such as technology, history and science, for example. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers are hardworking and committed. They plan lessons well to build knowledge incrementally and take consideration of pupils needs. Relationships are good and pupils are happy and develop confidence as a result. There is a good level of structure and support in lessons, including in written tasks. These are marked well. This benefits pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well. However, while pupils who need it are supported well in their learning, potentially higher attaining pupils sometimes make only satisfactory progress. They do not always attain the highest standards they are capable of because they could be stretched further, especially when using what they have learnt when writing in subjects other than English. Overall, pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress throughout the school. As a result, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. Progress is better in reading than in writing. The school has identified the development of writing and of pupils' investigative skills as areas for development in the forthcoming year.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their behaviour is excellent. The school motto of 'be all that you can be' is translated effectively into daily work and play. As a result, pupils develop a caring and considerate attitude and are very respectful of the achievements of others. Care and welfare are good. The headteacher knows the families very well and the pupils can confidently name an adult to whom they can turn to for help.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and it is well led and managed. Children get a good start to their education. Arrangements for children to start in school and for them and their parents to learn about the school's systems and procedures are good. Teachers and support staff plan together effectively to support children and give them a good and happy start to their school lives. They make good gains in their learning and achieve well. However, while many children attain the standards expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1, few attain above this. Standards in writing and numeracy are below those expected.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the breadth and regularity of pupils' writing experiences and improve their skills in applying what have been taught in literacy in other subjects.
- Provide greater opportunity for pupils to develop investigative and research skills.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Children settle well into the Nursery and Reception class and make good gains in their learning, due to the good quality of the provision. This good progress continues through Years 1 to Year 6 and achievement is currently good overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported effectively so that they achieve well in relation to their abilities. By the end of year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the average. The school tracking of standards has identified that whilst overall achievement is good, potentially higher attaining pupils do not always achieve the highest possible standards. This is particularly the case in writing and research skills. Writing has now been identified as an area for whole school development.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development is good. They work together amicably; they respect the feelings of others and have a well-developed sense of fair play. Pupils have a good social and community awareness. The school council, for example, has been influential in making a number of improvements to the school environment. Pupils are also keen fundraisers for good causes. They respond positively when given responsibility, such as being members of the active school council or 'play leaders' for those who might need support at break times. Attitudes to learning are positive, although a few pupils sometimes complain that their work isn't as challenging as it might be. They are safety conscious and are concerned for the welfare of others. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils consistently display mature and thoughtful behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils are confident and positive about school, accepting responsibility for their behaviour and encouraging each other to do the same. However opportunities for pupils to develop their independent research skills are sometimes missed. Although attendance is no better than satisfactory, the school has appropriate and rigorous procedures to deal with absences.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well and classrooms are characterised by a calm and purposeful atmosphere with good relationships. This enables pupils to enjoy school and helps develop their self-confidence. Marking is well developed and helps learners understand how to progress with the next stages of their learning. Lessons are frequently good and sometimes outstanding. This is because teachers make good use of detailed assessments to carefully plan lessons that meet the widely varying needs of the pupils. However, higher achieving pupils are not consistently challenged. Their progress is sometimes no better than satisfactory because they are not given sufficient opportunities to apply and develop skills they have learnt in their writing in other subjects. Teachers enliven teaching by making good use of questioning. Pupils are encouraged to collaborate together in their learning and they particularly enjoy this aspect of their lessons. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and are well supported by teaching assistants. The school has a good

strategy for providing targets for pupils. This supports learning well because pupils are more aware of the progress they are expected to make.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides its pupils with a good programme for learning that is broad, balanced and gives suitable emphasis to different subjects. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology by the pupils in other subjects. The curriculum is enhanced well by the teaching of French but the design and investigative element of technology, history and science remains a relative weakness. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well-planned and provides children with a good start to their education. There is a wide range of activities during and after school hours with trips to places of interest and the older pupils look forward to their residential visit for a varied range of activities. Visitors are invited in to the school and effectively broaden the pupils' views of community and national issues. The programme for extending pupils' personal, social and health education helps them effectively to find out how to stay safe and healthy, and is preparing them well for their future lives. The emphasis on physical recreation ensures that the pupils get plenty of exercise, which they enjoy. The learning environment in lessons and around the school is dynamic and attractive.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are cared for sensitively in a very welcoming and friendly environment. Procedures for protecting and caring for those who are vulnerable are clear, thorough and most effective. All members of staff have a good awareness of child protection and health and safety procedures and there are effective links with family support organisations. Work with the parents and carers of pupils who have specific learning needs is well developed and the deployment of teaching assistants and careful testing and tracking of these pupils helps them to make good progress. There is some additional provision for pupils who are gifted or talented, but this is relatively undeveloped and as yet has too little impact on teachers' planning for lessons. Systematic measures to track, support and guide pupils are well developed. Targets are set for learning. Pupils know their individual goals and, through detailed marking, they are guided towards reaching them. The school council effectively helps to support pupils' well-being and older pupils assist pupils lower down the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a good, clear understanding of the school based on regular and rigorous monitoring. Information gained is shared openly with staff and governors and used effectively to highlight areas for improvement in the development plan. The governors are strong supporters of the school and feel confident in their role. They visit regularly and have a good knowledge of the school. Coordinators' roles have been developed effectively in core areas of English, mathematics and Foundation Stage. Coordination of some other subjects is at an early stage of development and the school has plans to develop coordinators' monitoring roles further. All legal requirements are met and financial management is good.



## 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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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?	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	1
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	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

15 December 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Katherines Primary School, Harlow, CM19 5NJ

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited the other day. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you in lessons, playtimes and school performances. We think yours is a good school.

The really good things about your school.

- You behave exceptionally well.
- Teaching is good.
- You make good progress in your learning and reach the expected standards in your work.
- Your parents are pleased with how well you are doing.
- All staff look after you well and you have a friendly school.
- You have lots of exciting clubs, trips and visitors.
- Your headteacher knows you and the school very well and she knows what to do to make the school even better.

The things we have asked your teachers to help you with so you can improve further.

- To write about things in different ways and for different purposes
- To plan how you are going to set about your learning and to find things out for yourself.

You can help too by regularly attending school. We hope you had a lovely holiday and a happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barnes

Lead inspector