

Kempsey Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116690
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312367
Inspection dates	11–12 September 2007
Reporting inspector	David Mankelow

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Lucas
Headteacher	Eve Doyle
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2004
School address	Ellsdon Kempsey Worcester WR5 3NT
Telephone number	01905 820262
Fax number	01905 820262

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kempsey is slightly larger than the average primary school. It serves an area of relative economic advantage. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies from year to year but generally is broadly in line with that expected for their age. A new, permanent headteacher starts in January 2008 who will be the sixth headteacher since April 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Kempsey is a satisfactory and improving school where pupils reach broadly average standards except in writing which is below average. This is because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing activities and to write in lessons other than English. Since April 2006 there has been significant turbulence in staffing at a senior level. The most recent temporary headteachers have ensured satisfactory leadership and management for the school, resulting in improvements in pupils' behaviour and punctuality. They have raised teachers' morale with rigorous, constructive monitoring of their work. However, subject leaders are not yet effective in their monitoring roles. With strong support from the local authority and improved support from the school's governors, the headteachers have ensured that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The provisional results of the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2007 are likely to be broadly average. This represents sound achievement for that group of pupils, which included an above average proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' current work indicates that standards are rising but more able pupils are not always challenged to reach their full potential.

The youngest children make a good start in Reception and generally reach standards that are a little above those expected by the time they enter Year 1 because they are taught well. In the rest of the school, teaching is satisfactory with strengths in Years 4 to 6. Although teachers provide opportunities for pupils to assess their own achievement, this practice is not fully embedded. Also, the results of a variety of assessments are not used sufficiently well to plan future work that is well matched to pupils' prior learning. This is particularly true for the more able and in setting detailed, challenging targets. The school has a new system for tracking pupils' progress but this has not been in place long enough to ensure that potential underachievement is identified and strategies put in place to overcome it.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. They make satisfactory contributions to the school and wider communities through their monitor duties and charitable fund raising. Pupils' preparation for their future lives is sound, as reflected in their satisfactory achievements in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

Teachers provide a satisfactory curriculum that they recognise requires improvement to ensure the achievement of all learners, particularly in writing and for the more able. The award of the Active Mark for physical education and Leading Aspect Award for modern foreign languages recognise the school's good quality provision in these areas.

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its pupils, resulting in them feeling happy and safe. Safeguarding requirements are met. However, the school has recognised the need to update staff in child protection matters and has arranged training to take place shortly. Relationships are good and a strength. When asked if there was anybody they could go to if they were worried, a pupil typically replied, 'I would talk to my teacher. She is lovely and always listens to us.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The youngest children are taught well. They are given good opportunities to develop independence and cooperation. They relish taking on responsibilities even at this young age and are generally confident and articulate in talking to adults. There is usually a good mix of adult-led and child-inspired learning, which gives children a secure environment for making choices. Careful planning and preparation ensure a variety of activities for the children but there is some inconsistency in this that occasionally limits the children's learning. The adults around them ensure that children's language and mathematical development is good. The Foundation Stage is a safe, caring environment. There are good relationships with parents as a result of honest interaction and staff being available at the beginning and end of the day.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities for extended writing and for writing in subjects other than English.
- Involve pupils more effectively in the assessment of their own work and use assessment information more consistently to plan work that is well matched to pupils' prior learning and to set challenging targets, especially for the more able.
- Develop the effectiveness of subject leaders and senior staff in rigorously monitoring the work of the school and ensuring that new tracking procedures are used effectively.

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

After a good start in Reception children generally enter Year 1 with standards that are a little above those expected. Progress slows in the middle of the school but recovers again in Years 4 to 6, resulting in pupils leaving the school with standards that are broadly average, although somewhat lower in writing. Pupils with the potential for higher attainment have not reached the standards of which they are capable. In 2007, the Year 6 cohort included an unusually high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This influenced the results. While the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 were below average, they made good progress from their starting points. There was also a larger than usual number of pupils in the cohort who joined from other schools during Years 3 to 6. Pupils who had been at the school continuously, from Year 1, generally achieved better than those who joined later. Pupils' work and the school's assessments indicate that standards are rising.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage develop a good sense of self-worth and high levels of respect for themselves and each other. This is successfully built on as they get older and pupils work and play well together. Attendance is good and punctuality has improved. Most pupils are well motivated to learn, keen to do their best and willing to further improve their work when given advice. Pupils are generally attentive in lessons and take part enthusiastically, although at times their interest wanes when asked to sit for too long listening to their teacher. The school council

has an active voice in decision-making, and chalks up successes in extending playground equipment and improving the toilets. When asked what they would like to improve next in school, most said 'nothing, we like it just as it is!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent, with strengths in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6, where standards are rising as a result of the good, well-focused teaching. Typically, there are good relationships and teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so they achieve well. Teachers generally prepare resources well, as was seen in a stimulating Year 5 geography lesson where pupils expressed high levels of interest when presented with beautiful pictures of mountainous regions. However, some lessons are not sufficiently interesting to sustain pupils' attention and their progress slows. Pupils are now given valuable opportunities to assess their own learning but this practice is new and their assessments are not always accurate. Teachers make their own assessments of pupils' work but do not always use the results to plan work that is sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Children benefit from a good curriculum in the Foundation Stage that meets their personal needs and enables successful learning. Curriculum planning in Years 1 to 6 takes account of pupils' abilities although the range of opportunities provided is not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent so skills are not always as well developed as they should be, although generally they are satisfactory. There are missed opportunities to enable pupils to extend their writing skills, particularly in history, geography and religious education. Curriculum enrichment is good. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about out of school clubs, especially those involving sports and music. These activities have a positive effect on supporting their good social development. Pupils value learning Spanish and their links with Guatamala. These are having a good impact on their understanding of a different culture.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils say their teachers are responsive to their needs and when 'they have wobbles in their studies' give just the right amount of support to enable them to get back on track. The provision made for looked after children is a strength. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support that helps them achieve successfully. Systems to track pupils' academic progress are very recent and consequently have not yet had time to have a full impact. Individual pupil targets are usefully shared with parents at consultation meetings. However, there are inconsistencies in how and when these are reviewed during the year. As a result, not all pupils are clear about what they have to do to achieve a higher standard of work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The current temporary headteacher, in close consultation with her predecessor and working alongside the permanent headteacher appointed for January 2008, has quickly and accurately established a clear view on where the school is and what needs to be improved. With support from the local authority, they have already written an effective interim improvement plan which includes the main issues identified by this inspection. Senior leaders gather and analyse a range of information about the progress being made by groups of pupils but this information is not yet being used to the full by teachers in their planning. Parents have been deeply concerned about the turbulence in leadership but the majority are understanding and supportive of the efforts that governors have made to minimise the impact of the disruption. The senior teachers provided effective continuity and stability for pupils during this period. The governing body, ably led by the chair, now has clear procedures to hold the school to account. Governors have improved financial control and the budget is now sustainable. Behaviour and punctuality have improved, and standards are beginning to rise, demonstrating that the school has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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.

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	3
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	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

14 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kempsey Primary School, Worcester, WR5 3NT

You may remember that I visited your school a few weeks ago with two other inspectors. Thank you very much for making us so welcome and telling us all about your school. I am writing now to tell you what we found.

You all know that you have had lots of headteachers in the last 18 months. However, your teachers have worked very hard to make sure that this has not really spoiled things for you. Everything is at least satisfactory and some things are better than this. You are reaching standards that are about the same as in other schools and making as much progress. In fact, the youngest children in your school do better than in many others.

We were pleased to find that most of you enjoy coming to school, you attend regularly and punctually, and your behaviour has improved. Your temporary headteacher is working closely with the permanent one who will start full time in January and they have a plan to make things even better. We have asked them to do these things, most of which are already on their plan:

- Give you more chances to do long pieces of writing and to do more writing in lessons like history and geography so your writing gets better.
- Give you more chances to say for yourselves whether you have understood something.
- Make sure that your work is always hard enough, especially for those of you who find work easy.
- Make sure that the senior teachers check that everything is going well in the school and that you are helped if any of you fall behind.

You can really help your teachers to do these things by always listening carefully to what they say and by trying your hardest all of the time.

With my best wishes

David Mankelow Lead Inspector



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