

Kingsgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132245
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	315988
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Cohen
Headteacher	Ms L Hayward
Date of previous school inspection	28 October 2002
School address	Kingsgate Road London NW6 4LB
Telephone number	020 7624 5379
Fax number	020 7372 9367

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsgate is a larger than average primary school. It serves an inner-city area with very high levels of social deprivation. For instance, the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is three times the national average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are higher than in the great majority of schools. A significant minority of pupils are at the early stages of speaking English. About one third of the pupils come from refugee or asylum-seeking families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools. More pupils join or leave the school at unusual times than in most schools. The school has experienced high staff turnover in the last two years. The current headteacher took up post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Kingsgate is a satisfactory and improving school. The school is in very challenging circumstances. The high level of disadvantage contributes significantly to the low attainment but the school acknowledges that standards are not high enough. It has ambitious plans to raise standards and achievement. Under the headteacher's strong leadership, systems such as rigorous tracking of pupils' progress have been put in place. This augurs well for the future. In particular, provision in the Foundation Stage has improved and is now good. Most parents are appreciative of the school's efforts. As one parent wrote, 'The school does good work and is very mindful and respectful of the diversity of pupils.'

Standards fluctuate from year to year but are well below average overall. For instance, results in Year 6 national tests were close to average in 2006 but provisional results are exceptionally low in 2007. Performance has been consistently low in assessments at the end of Year 2. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in reading in Key Stage 1 because of weaknesses in the teaching. Pupils' poor reading skills have hampered their ability to achieve to their potential in other subjects. The school has recognised this, arranged for training, purchased extra resources and strengthened monitoring. This has led to improved standards in the Foundation Stage. These techniques are now being introduced into Year 1 classes but have not yet had the same positive impact. From a low base, pupils' progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and was good for the cohort that left the school in 2006. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but there is not enough good teaching to make up for previous underachievement and to meet the high level of need. Consequently, given their starting points, pupils' achievement since joining the school is just satisfactory.

The school has introduced a very good, comprehensive system for tracking the attainment of pupils. This pinpoints any underperformance by pupils. Such information is readily available to teachers. It is used well by them in planning lessons and by senior leaders in arranging extra support for most pupils who need it. In particular, pupils are targeted who are judged able to improve to reach standards expected for their age. This is helping to raise achievement. However, the information is not used as effectively to improve the performance of more able pupils capable of attaining the highest levels. The curriculum is satisfactory but the school is at an early stage in providing for gifted and talented pupils.

The school works well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils respond well to the caring ethos in the school. Behaviour is good and their positive attitudes are shown by their improved attendance. Pupils who join the school are welcomed and sometimes make better progress than their peers. This is indicative of the good relationships that exist in the school. It is a harmonious community.

Many of the middle leaders, including for subjects, have recently taken on their roles following staff changes and a reorganisation of the leadership team. They are being suitably supported with training and guidance and their roles are clear. However, it is too early to judge how effective they are in driving up standards. The school has laid the foundations for further improvement. Consequently, capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with communication and language skills that are well below expected levels. They get off to a flying start in the Nursery and this is consolidated in the Reception classes. The provision in the Foundation Stage is well managed and there is good planning that is based on accurate assessments of children's needs. This underpins the good teaching and results in good achievement by pupils. In particular, there is skilled teaching of reading that helps to reduce the gap with the national average and helps children to make progress in other skills too. There is a good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to learn independently. Consequently, in 2007 at the end of the Foundation Stage the children did well and came close to attaining the Early Learning Goals. This is a significant improvement on results in previous years. There is insufficient suitable outside area for learning but the school has exciting plans to remedy this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of reading to pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that there is consistently good teaching throughout the school.
- Improve the provision for more able pupils to ensure they make good progress.
- Ensure that the new arrangements for middle leaders are effective.

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

Provisional results in 2007 reveal that standards are exceptionally low in reading and writing. This is partly explained by the low attainment that pupils have on entry to school. In particular, in this Year 6 group there was an exceptionally high number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is also partly attributable to some underachievement resulting from weaknesses in teaching key skills and high staff turnover in previous years. For instance, the school's own analysis shows that almost half the pupils who took Year 2 assessments in 2006 made below average progress in mathematics over the key stage. Provisional results for 2007 show improvement at Key Stage 1. The school's monitoring and observations by inspectors during the inspection confirm that most pupils are now making satisfactory progress in lessons. Targets for 2007 were not challenging but those being set now are.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn values which underpin the positive ethos in the school. They reflect on their response to events and respect other beliefs and cultures. One girl said, 'You can learn from how other people do things differently.' The school has gained the 'Healthy Schools' award and pupils understand about healthy eating and have an enthusiasm for keeping fit. As one pupil said, 'You only have one body and you have to look after it.' Pupils feel safe in lessons and when out of school. They enjoy their time in school and look forward to returning after holidays or weekends. They develop a good sense of community responsibility and are keen to support activities, such as

when discussing school rules or acting as playtime buddies. Their preparation for secondary school is unsatisfactory because of low basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers manage their classes well and have created good atmospheres for learning. Consequently, lessons are not disrupted by misbehaviour. Lesson objectives are clear and the pupils know what they are expected to learn. There is satisfactory use of interactive whiteboards to add interest to the lessons. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils but vary in their effectiveness to do this in practice. In the best lessons, teaching assistants are used well to modify the work appropriately and boost the progress of targeted pupils. However, not all teaching assistants have had enough training for the tasks they are asked to do, for instance, the teaching of reading. Teachers are not ensuring that pupils build up skills progressively when learning letters and sounds.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is developing well and there is clear emphasis on improving pupils' enjoyment of learning and their skills in numeracy and literacy. There is thoughtful planning to ensure that pupils learning English as an additional language are fully included in the life of the school. Special activities, such as the celebration of festivals, Black History Month and the international evening, help pupils to celebrate the diversity of the world around them. The school is aiming to strengthen this aspect further. The school is at an early stage in developing provision for gifted and talented pupils. An interesting range of extra-curricular activities and visits enriches pupils' personal development well. For example, the art club produced a beautiful mosaic to improve the appearance of the playground. Pupils are now being charged to attend after-school clubs in line with the local authority policy. The school intends to monitor the impact this has on pupils' levels of participation.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Arrangements for the safety of pupils are good and documentation in the recording of security checks has recently improved. Pupils are given clear guidance on how to behave and are included well in decisions made about school life. Rates of attendance have improved significantly, by involving parents, and increased levels of support and encouragement, for example, through the effective work of the learning mentors. The school uses data well to monitor the progress of pupils and target and support those who are underperforming. Pupils know their targets and what they need to do to improve. There are no formal procedures for inducting pupils who join at unusual times. However, support is satisfactory because of a welcoming ethos and 'buddying' arrangements, including same language support when appropriate and available. The school monitors the progress of different groups very well except for this particular group.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The arrival of the new headteacher coincided with the school joining in a local authority initiative to raise achievement. The school is very focused on raising standards. The headteacher has spearheaded this drive and has successfully united the staff behind her as a result of her commitment and example. More responsibilities have been delegated to staff and consequently increased their belief that they can make a difference. Senior leaders work closely and very effectively with the local authority and the teachers to review pupils' progress termly. The targets incorporated into the plan that results from these considerations are demanding and require good teaching for them to be met. The governors are supportive of the school and are beginning to act as a critical friend.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

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	2
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	4

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

12 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kingsgate Primary School, London, NW6 4LB

Thank you for being so helpful when we inspected your school. You told us that you enjoy coming to school, feel safe there and that the teachers and other adults look after you well. Members of your school council said that their views are respected by the school. They have helped to improve the toilets (but not enough!), play equipment and they also helped to devise the behaviour policy.

We think that Kingsgate is satisfactory and improving. The things we like are:

- you all get on well together and respect different cultures and beliefs
- you behave well and attend school much more regularly now
- children get off to a good start in the Nursery
- the school works well with other groups to make things better for you
- the school is led well.

We think that the teaching is getting better and that means you are doing better in your work. We have asked the school to do four things in order for Kingsgate to become a good school. These are to make sure that:

- younger pupils can read well
- you all get good teaching
- the more able pupils do as well as they can
- new leaders for subjects do their job well.

For your part, you should continue to behave well. Make sure that you ask if you do not understand. The teachers will be very pleased to help you.

We wish you continuing success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Barry Jones

Lead inspector