

# Kenn Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	113397
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325810
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Wiola Hola HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Stevenson
Headteacher	Jo Evans
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 June 2007
School address	Kennford Exeter EX6 7TX
Telephone number	01392 832347
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector visited nine lessons and two whole-school assemblies, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a group of parents. She observed the school's work, and looked at samples of the school's self-evaluation documents, some minutes of meetings of the governing body, selected policy documents, records of pupils' attainment, and analysed 41 parental questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following.

- The extent to which standards in writing have risen in Years 1 and 2 and the way in which the presentation of pupils' work has improved in all year groups.
- Standards and achievement in science and the practical work in this subject.
- The learning and progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of subject leaders in particular, and also that of other leaders and managers, in contributing to school improvement.

## Information about the school

Kenn Church of England Primary School is much smaller than average. It has four classes including one for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and with English as an additional language are below average. The proportion from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the percentage with statements of special educational needs are both well above average. Most children join the school having had nursery or pre-school experience and with attainment at generally expected levels.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It has gone from strength to strength on a steep trajectory of improvement because of the tireless determination of the headteacher, staff and governors to achieve excellence in all they provide for the pupils. Even though the school already has many outstanding features, staff and governors know that there is still more that can be done to lift pupils' good outcomes even further. They know exactly what actions to take next as a result of extremely thorough systems for school self-evaluation. In view of the rapid improvements made in the last four years, outstanding leadership and management, the good teaching, excellent curriculum, and exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support that pupils receive, the school is extremely well placed to improve even further.

Pupils enjoy school greatly and develop well as confident, courteous and considerate young people, extremely well aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives. Standards are above average. Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 is good overall, and exceptionally high in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make extremely good progress because of the school's outstanding provision for them in many ways. Most lessons are good. Work seen in pupils' books and discussions with pupils reflect some outstanding teaching. Occasionally, the pace of work, whilst satisfactory, is on the slow side, or tasks are not challenging enough for some pupils. Most teachers have highly developed skills in questioning pupils to elicit the extent of their understanding. The way in which the headteacher and senior teacher compile and use data on pupils' attainment and progress is extremely effective. They and other staff know exactly how well pupils have achieved and what they are capable of achieving.

One of the most striking features of this successful school is its exciting and extremely well-planned curriculum that brings together topics and subjects to enliven learning and make it highly relevant and engaging. Classrooms glisten with wonderful displays. Computers enhance greatly the quality of learning. Although already outstanding, there is scope to develop the curriculum further so as to boost the school's existing good work on community cohesion and lift further pupils' outcomes in relation to their social and cultural development.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and includes some outstanding features. In view of a series of staff changes in this part of the school, the headteacher is rightly seeking to review provision in order to ensure that the high

quality of work can be maintained and enhanced. Children at this stage benefit from excellent accommodation, inside and outdoors, that is used mostly to good effect although occasionally some opportunities are missed to develop children's skills in some areas of learning.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise further the quality of teaching by improving, where necessary, teachers' skills in:
  - questioning pupils to check on how well they are grasping new knowledge or ideas
  - providing tasks at just the right level of challenge for each pupil or group of pupils so that learning moves forward quickly.
- Enhance provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage:
  - to enrich further the children's learning experiences
  - to enable them to plan and review more effectively the activities they choose to do or are encouraged to engage in.
- Extend the school's work on promoting community cohesion in the wider community, beyond the school and immediate locality, by formulating more clearly how the religious, ethnic and socio-economic strands of this work are to be woven into pupils' educational experiences.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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Pupils achieve well, academically and personally, because learning is so greatly enjoyable and because they feel so secure in the school's highly supportive and encouraging atmosphere. Relationships are outstanding in all respects. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, in lessons and in the lovely school grounds that pupils and parents appreciate greatly. Attendance is above average and no pupils are persistent absentees. There are no exclusions.

The school has been successful in speeding up the rates of pupils' academic progress in recent years, as can be seen in the improved figures for progress over Years 3 to 6 of successive groups of pupils. Results in national tests fluctuate in this small school but, in the main, the proportions of pupils reaching or exceeding expected levels in English, mathematics and science are above average. The school sets challenging targets and most pupils are making good progress towards them, or even exceeding them.

Learning in lessons is good because topics are so well planned and because most teaching encourages pupils to be creative, and to explore and exchange ideas. Pupils work hard, are attentive, and only occasionally does their concentration drift. Progress in the upper part of the school is generally better than in the lower. Since the last inspection, improvements in provision have ensured that standards in science have risen throughout the school and writing has improved in Years 1 and 2. Presentation of work in pupils' exercise books and in displays is now of very high quality overall. Because information and communication technology is used

frequently and effectively in learning right across the curriculum, standards in this subject are also high. The specific interventions available for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those at risk of falling behind with their work are particularly successful in enabling these pupils to make outstanding progress.

The school promotes well and in many ways pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and there are some exemplary outcomes as seen in samples of written work that show the depth of pupils' feelings movingly expressed, in the work of the school council, for charities, and in the respectful conduct of pupils, for example. The school is aware that even more can be done to raise pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society and is seeking to do so. The curriculum and daily assemblies, that include an act of collective worship, enable pupils to grow well in their understanding of different faiths, Christianity and others.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## How effective is the provision?

The excellent curriculum plays a huge part in enabling pupils to achieve well. Through it, knowledge, skills and understanding are developed progressively to build well on what pupils can already do in the mixed-age classes. Subjects are woven together extremely successfully. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Pupils are grouped appropriately and in different ways with a view to maximising progress as well as fostering understanding of each other's needs and differences; such arrangements work well. Stimulating displays engage pupils' interest and celebrate achievement.

Teaching includes much good and outstanding practice but it is sometimes satisfactory. High quality teaching, such as that seen in a mathematics lesson on reflective symmetry, captivates and enthuses pupils and keeps them on their toes

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

with provocative questioning and challenging tasks. Very good planning of work on World War II drew links across subjects and resulted in a depth of understanding of the topic, and spontaneous singing of war-time songs during an art lesson. Teaching in all lessons makes clear to pupils what is expected of them and includes good preparation and use of resources. Lessons are orderly and many are also great fun. Much practical work is undertaken to underpin and reinforce learning; this is particularly true in science but also in art and elsewhere. For example, pupils enjoyed enormously painting a fish from observing and feeling a real one, testing hand-crafted boats for floating or sinking, and showing the inspector the animated film they had made. The school's records show some inconsistencies in the rates of pupils' progress from class to class that are linked to the quality of teaching. Highly effective teaching assistants work in close partnership with class teachers to support specific pupils or groups.

Care, guidance and support are exemplary in this school. The headteacher, staff and governors work inordinately hard to recognise and overcome barriers to learning that a pupil might have and these efforts are highly praised by parents. The school's systems for rewarding good work, behaviour and attitudes are successful in that pupils respond very positively to them. The school works well to promote good attendance and punctuality.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is widely acclaimed by staff, parents and governors as having been hugely instrumental in improving the school. She is unequivocal about aiming high. She is very well supported by the senior teacher who has worked successfully to develop the school's curriculum and assessment arrangements. These two senior leaders provide much valued support to their colleagues, as well as learning from them, so that teamwork is of an exceptionally high order, and all staff play vital roles in this small school. Subject leadership has developed well since the last inspection and these leaders are held to account for outcomes in their areas, reporting to the headteacher and to the link governor for their subject. The school also benefits greatly from a highly effective governing body whose excellent work over the last few years has added to the rapid rate of the school's improvement. Governors are exceptionally well informed about the school and their roles, and have ensured that all statutory requirements are met. In particular, the school's systems for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are totally robust. Planning for school improvement is comprehensive and widely understood by staff resulting in concerted and successful actions.

In this highly inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are

considered very specifically. The school works in outstanding partnership with external agencies to secure extra support for those pupils who need it.

The school's weekly newsletter is very informative and appreciated by many parents. A few parents state that they would value some more information about their child's progress and the school has this year adjusted its schedule of reporting to parents and parents' meetings. Many parents contribute to the life of the school, in running clubs and through the parent-teacher association, for example.

Whilst there are good features in the school's existing work on promoting community cohesion, in the school itself and the local community for example, the school is aware that some elements have yet to be developed more fully. It is planning to forge links with another church school in an inner-city area in England and enhance other aspects of this work across the curriculum.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The excellent space for the youngest children is generally used to good effect. It is well organised and well resourced, bright, airy, safe and secure. There is much for children to do and explore. Inside spaces are fresh and clean, with clearly marked labels on drawers and containers so that children can find and put away equipment independently. Outside, the covered area and the garden spaces on different levels offer much, although their potential for learning is not currently being fully exploited. The teachers and teaching assistant plan and organise activities well but some activities could be further enriched, such as those for creative role play or writing. All the key areas of learning are covered, often through linked work on a theme such as 'Pirates' so that children make good progress. Very good records are kept of children's achievements, in photographs, notes and samples of children's work. The children currently in this group are about to move into Year 1 with skills that are well above those levels expected for their ages overall. With recent and impending staff changes, leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are in a period of transition. Nevertheless, the school has ensured that provision is currently



being maintained at a good level.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents are positive and appreciative of how the school enables their children to flourish and enjoy school life. Of the relatively few parents that added comments to the questionnaire, some praise the school for its improvements in recent years, the headteacher and governors for steering them, and for the fact that staff and governors are readily available to talk with parents if required. Praise is also given for the school's work in providing for pupils with special educational needs and for the range of clubs provided. A few parents feel the need for some more information about their child's progress, and individuals would like specific information about aspects of the school's work such as the teaching of mathematics, or about how they could help their child at home. A few others mention inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes.

The analysis of the parents' questionnaire added evidence and weight to the inspector's positive findings. The balance and range of views expressed by parents was consistent with inspection outcomes.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kenn Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspector received 41 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 139 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	12	1	0

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



19 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kenn Church of England Primary School, Kennford, Exeter,  
Devon, EX6 7TX

Thank you for your welcome and helpfulness when I visited the school recently. I valued greatly speaking to many of you in lessons and at other times. You clearly enjoy coming to this school. I now write to tell you about my findings.

Kenn is an outstanding school that has improved very swiftly in the last few years. Good teaching and many excellent learning opportunities enable you to make good progress in your academic work, and in the way that you develop into thoughtful, considerate and courteous young people. By the end of Year 6, pupils in this school are getting better than average test results and are well prepared for the future.

The way in which teachers plan your lessons to link several subjects through interesting topics is extremely good. I saw some wonderful displays of your work in classrooms and you told me about the many things you enjoy, such as swimming in the school pool (even though it is sometimes cold), learning about science, making animated films, being outside in the lovely school grounds and taking part in the many after-school clubs. The staff care for you exceptionally well and seek to make sure that each and every one of you is helped to overcome any problems or difficulties that you may have. You are given specific help when you need it and this is particularly helpful in boosting your progress.

The headteacher, staff and governors are leading and managing the school extremely well. They know exactly what is working well and what can be improved further. I have asked the school to do three things.

- Help teachers to become even more skilful at giving you work at exactly the right level and at checking on how well you are grasping new ideas.
- Enrich some of the activities in Class 1 for the youngest children.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about the lives, values, customs and beliefs of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and the world.

I hope that you continue coming to school regularly, enjoying your work and that you succeed in making the most of your time at Kenn Church of England Primary School.

Yours faithfully

Viola Hola  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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