

# Kestrels' Field Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120103
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester City
<b>Inspection number</b>	327198
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rashida Sharif HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	390
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	51
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lee Matts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Higgins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Maidenwell Avenue Hamilton Leicester LE5 1TG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 246 1732
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 246 3850

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 May 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Kestrels' Field Primary School is an above-average-sized school. Over 66% of the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the majority of whom are of Indian origin. The proportion of pupils identified as being at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is growing but remains just below the national average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills that are below those expected of three-year-olds. The school achieved its Healthy School Status and its Active Quality Mark in 2007/08.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Kestrels' Field is a good and rapidly improving school where pupils are happy and say that they feel safe. As one pupil said, 'I learn so much from school. I love coming to school and being with my teacher and friends.' This is further supported by parents who believe that 'the school goes that extra mile to help and guide the children'. Pupils make good progress across the school, including children in the Nursery and Reception classes, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. This is because their needs are identified very early and they are given a good level of support and guidance. The school works very effectively with others - for example, the education welfare officer - to support pupils and their parents. The good leadership of the headteacher and her senior leadership team is the driving force behind the recent improvements. There is sheer determination and a shared focus on ensuring that pupils not only make good progress from their low starting points, but also that they reach the standards expected for their age. Very good tracking systems are in place and leaders analyse assessment information about individual pupils' progress in detail to set challenging targets. As a result, the gap between the school's results and the national average is beginning to close. Standards are beginning to improve, and are now closer to average, although fewer pupils than nationally reach the highest levels.

The pupils' enjoyment of school, their positive attitudes to learning and their good achievement are helped by good teaching and a relevant, practical curriculum. For example, there is a well-structured programme of teaching reading through linking sounds and letters, reading champions, 'readathons', and the wide range of reading materials organised by topics around the corridors as a library for pupils to use. This is having a positive impact on motivating all pupils to read, write and work independently on projects of their interest.

In lessons, activities are varied and practical. Lessons move at a brisk pace. They provide pupils with good opportunities to work both independently and together in groups. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly of those of middle ability, are not consistently high. Marking has developed and helps pupils understand their literacy and numeracy targets, which they say 'help us to know what we need to do to improve'. However, the school is aware that marking remains inconsistent and comments in books are not always followed up. There are plans to review the whole-school policy as there is too little time allocated during the lesson for pupils and their teachers to respond to the comments in books.

The school offers a wide range of clubs and enrichment activities which effectively contribute to pupils' good personal development and well-being, their enthusiasm for school and the good relationships they enjoy. Pupils behave very well and are polite and sociable both in the classrooms and around the school. Older pupils take care of the younger ones and say, 'if we have any problems we know who we can talk to.' Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and take on responsibility readily.

The school self-evaluation, though lengthy, is accurate, honest and provides a robust basis for further improvement. Action plans are in place and include appropriate priorities. While satisfactory, the promotion of community cohesion is not yet systematic. For example, the school works closely with some of the local communities reflected in the school but has yet to evaluate the impact of some of their work. The roles and responsibilities of all staff and particularly those of the senior and middle leadership team are well defined. They are confident, skilled and undertake rigorous monitoring and evaluation of their areas of responsibilities and,

if necessary, hold staff to account. Governors are supportive and have clear procedures to ensure that they fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They have fully assumed their role as critical friends and hold leaders to account. The school's good capacity to improve is evident in the impact of strong senior leadership on the school's overall good provision, pupils' achievement and improving standards.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start and make good progress from generally low starting points. The skills and knowledge they gain when they leave Reception enable them to reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. The children's personal development and their social skills are good, which contributes to their good progress. All children work and play harmoniously. The well-established key person system helps staff to get to know children's learning and social needs well before they start school. This enables the children to settle quickly and happily, have good relationships with staff, and enjoy learning.

Leadership and management of the Early Years are good. Assessment, recording and reporting of children's progress are methodical and provide a good overview of their development. The early introduction of strategies to link sounds and letters helps children to develop the skills they need to read and write. Teaching is good and all the adults helping children to develop their knowledge and understanding are skilled. Through their effective organisation, staff provide a range of exciting things for children to do which engage their interest. The curriculum is well planned and there is a satisfactory balance between activities directed by the staff, and those children choose for themselves. The school recognises that they have not fully exploited the potential of the outdoor area.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the overall achievement and standards of all pupils and particularly those of middle ability.
- Improve marking in books so that pupils know what they need to do to further improve their work, and provide time in lessons to enable them to respond to the teachers' comments.
- Develop the work with a range of communities and ensure that community cohesion is monitored and evaluated.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils start school with levels of skills below expectations for their age. Progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and attainment is broadly average by the start of Key Stage 1. Progress within Key Stage 1 is good and pupils now continue to make good progress at Key Stage 2. This is an improving picture from previous years where progress was hindered, due in part to problems in recruitment and retention of specialist teachers. There is now a full complement of specialist staff and the school's own data indicate that pupils are making better progress than in previous years. This was further supported by the good progress seen in lessons during the inspection. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress as do pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Higher attaining pupils make good progress and some rapid progress. In addition, the performance of girls is better than that of boys. Pupils in the middle-ability range however, make slower progress. The school recognises

that the needs of this group are not always fully met and plans are in place to respond more effectively to their needs.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, are good. Across the school, they enjoy learning, have a strong work ethic and are confident in their own abilities. Their behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary. They show respect and consideration towards each other. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem and if they have any concerns they know who to go to. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and thoroughly enjoy their energetic 'wake and shake' sessions during the day. They are developing a good awareness of what it means to be responsible citizens within their school and wider community although the school recognises that the roles and responsibilities of members of the school council could be developed further. Pupils eagerly take on responsibilities by, for example, being on the school council and as members of the eco club and gardening club where they grow their own vegetables and use them as part of their cookery classes. Many also enjoy being 'playground buddies' to support younger pupils. Through a range of different experiences pupils are learning to understand and respect the cultures and traditions of other people and countries. They have a good understanding of the diversity of British life; their knowledge of other faiths and cultures is good. By the time pupils leave school they have the necessary tools to take full advantage of the next stage of their education. Attendance is satisfactory; the number of pupils who are absent from school for long periods is reducing and more pupils are arriving at school on time. The school makes strong efforts to improve attendance but does not always receive the full cooperation of a small minority of parents who take their children on extended leave abroad during term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The overall quality of teaching is good with some outstanding elements. Common strengths include the use of technology and the development of very positive relationships in each classroom between teachers and pupils and between pupils. Behaviour management strategies are effectively deployed which results in a calm and purposeful learning environment. The effective use of well trained teaching assistants ensures that all pupils are carefully supported in their learning. In addition, teachers work collaboratively to plan activities that engage pupils and are matched to the different learning needs of most pupils. Robust systems to track pupils' progress result in timely and well-targeted interventions to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. Many higher attaining pupils make rapid progress as a result of the challenging provision they receive. However, the school recognises the need to improve provision for middle ability pupils. Pupils' involvement in the process of setting targets is good although marking in books and the use of constructive comments on the pupils' work is effective in only some classes.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers work collaboratively to produce exciting and interesting cross-curricular themes and interesting lessons which reflect the school's aim to develop a more 'creative curriculum'. As a result, pupils are engaged and highly motivated. The provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is good. The curriculum is further enriched through frequent educational visits to places such as the theatre, and by visiting speakers. Many pupils attend the impressive range of extra-curricular activities. The school values the development of self-esteem, well-being and aspiration through the effective Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme. Pupils are actively encouraged to consider other faiths and cultures through all aspects of the curriculum. Some pupils have produced excellent projects as a result of their visits to, for example, India and Gujarat.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good. The quality of care and support is commended by parents and is very effective in promoting self-esteem amongst pupils starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continuing on to Year 6. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety meet statutory requirements. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and the school goes to great lengths to secure resources and expert help to meet individual needs. Positive behaviour is underpinned by the various clubs and other initiatives which value rewards and encourage teamwork. Supervisory staff play a significant role in ensuring that pupils are safe at all times. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are vigilant in their duties. For example, pupils responsible for the vegetable patch were confident in assessing when their garden needed water to help the vegetables to grow.

The provision of academic guidance is good. All pupils receive learning targets, which they know and understand. Teachers monitor pupils' progress effectively. However, although marking in books has improved it remains inconsistent across the school. The school recognises the need to develop the scope and effectiveness of written comments in pupils' books to encourage a dialogue between pupil and teacher on what they can do to improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has worked tirelessly, driven by her vision for the school which encompasses a commitment to pupils achieving the very best that they are capable of. She is well supported by her deputy headteacher and middle leaders. The leaders and managers promote good care, personal development and well-being for all pupils. The headteacher, senior staff and the governors are focused on improving pupils' overall achievement and standards, teaching and the curriculum. Together they have created a stimulating and successful learning environment.

The school knows itself well. Through their effective monitoring, the headteacher and senior staff have a good overview of the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Positive actions have been taken to develop and improve teaching. The school's assessment systems

are especially effective in highlighting precisely where there are gaps in pupils' learning or where pupils need extra challenge or support to move onto the next level of learning. This is particularly so for those who are the more-able or less-able. However, the school recognises that the needs of the middle-ability pupils are not always met fully.

Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school recognises that there is much work still to do to engage with their local communities. They have made a good start with their extended provision where an increasing number of parents are involved in, for example, a range of classes on language and how to help their children to learn. Before- and after-school provision is impressive with range of activities that are much appreciated by both pupils and their parents.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kestrels Field Primary School, Maidenwell Avenue, Leicester, LE5 1TG

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We very much enjoyed our visit and would like to share with you what we found. You and your parents told us that this is a good school and we agree. You and your teachers work hard to create a good working environment. Everyone at the school makes sure that you are safe and that your needs are met.

We were very impressed with your behaviour and the way you helped and supported each other to work and play. We were especially pleased to see how much you enjoyed your lessons and how eager you all are to learn new things. We were particularly impressed with some of your projects; for example, the visit to India and Gujarat which you did in your own time.

We could see by the work in your books and displays around the school that most of you are doing well in reading, writing, mathematics and science. We have asked the school to help you all to do even better and to make sure that everyone's needs are understood and fully met, particularly those who are of middle ability. We have also asked the teachers to improve marking in your books so that you know what you need to do to improve your work and to give you time in lessons so that you can respond to their comments.

We were very pleased to see that you are becoming very responsible young citizens who are aware of the importance of respecting other people who have different traditions and religions. We were equally glad to observe that you are aware of the importance of respecting other people who are not as fortunate as you might be. Your school is working hard to improve the work that it does with the local communities. However, we have asked the school to make sure that their work is making a difference to the school and the range of local communities. You can help by encouraging more of your parents to work with the school in whatever way they can.

You know the importance of protecting the environment, eating sensible food and taking lots of exercise. We were particularly impressed with how well you take care of your vegetable garden and use the vegetables in your cookery classes. We hope that you will continue to enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you to become successful and ready for your next stage in life.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector