

Kedington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124564
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	328164
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Anna Coyle

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.

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	117
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Frank Phillips
Headteacher	Mr Darren Woodward
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Walk Kedington Haverhill Suffolk CB9 7QZ
Telephone number	01440 702787
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school in a rural location. Almost all of the children are from White British backgrounds, and a few are from minority ethnic families. The proportion who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to other schools. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is typical for children's age. The school is due to become a full primary by 2011 under the local authority's reorganisation proposals.

The school has a breakfast and after-school club, a lunchtime club and a pre-school on the same site. These are all run privately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Children do well in this good village school because it is well led and managed, and has some outstanding features. It is at the heart of the local community and strives to maintain its very strong links and excellent partnerships with parents and external agencies to provide outstanding community cohesion. Governors, staff, parents and children are all rightly proud of it, and speak very highly of the headteacher who provides excellent direction for its development and ensures good capacity for improvement. The school evaluates itself very accurately and subject leadership and governance are good. It has improved well since the last inspection.

A key feature of the school is its excellent dedication to being an eco-friendly environment in which children are aware of how to take care of the world around them and look after what they have. They monitor the energy efficiency of the school, keep a careful watch on how much fuel the eco-boiler uses and are vigilant in turning off any unnecessary lights at every opportunity. Children grow their own fruit and vegetables for the kitchen table and sell any surplus locally. Recycling is a buzzword in their vocabulary as they compost waste and reuse materials whenever possible. This helps children to grow up being very aware of their future economic well-being and what it means to be responsible for their surroundings. Their personal development is outstanding.

Academically, standards are above expectations in English, mathematics and science by the time children reach the end of Year 4. From starting points that are typical for their age, children in the Nursery and Reception years make good progress and achieve well, although they do not have enough practical drama activities to extend their language and writing skills. After reaching the expected learning goals, children move on into Year 1 and continue to keep up a brisk rate of learning so that standards in the national assessments at the end of Year 2 are just above the expected levels overall in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress is maintained in Years 3 and 4. Music is a strength of the school in which children achieve highly and have represented their school successfully in local festivals.

Behind this good achievement lies an appealing curriculum and good quality teaching which spurs on learning and inspires children to 'reach for the sky'. The most able do especially well as a result of challenging work and teachers' high expectations. All children are valued equally as unique individuals and encouraged to think for themselves. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured effectively, and behaviour is good because the staff care for the children and support them well. They guide the children carefully by marking and assessing work conscientiously, although the children do not have clear enough targets for mathematics and some of the individual education plans do not identify specific targets to help them behave really well. Children love coming to school and eagerly enjoy learning so that attendance is above average. They know how to stay safe and healthy, and are becoming confident, independent learners. Parents are impressed with the school with many saying that their children are very happy and some commenting that they have 'come on in leaps and bounds' and are 'thirsty for more knowledge.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well and benefit from the caring, kindly staff who cherish them and carefully watch over their welfare and safety. Adults provide happy,

welcoming and lively environments, which are awash with colourful displays and plenty of resources to capture children's imagination and interest so that learning and development are good. They make sure that the children have a good curriculum with opportunities to choose activities for themselves and take part in adult-led tasks, such as gluing and sticking mathematical shapes and stars for Christmas decorations. Personal, social and emotional development is good. Children settle quickly and are well integrated into learning activities in which all are valued equally. Children who are particularly talented and those who find learning more difficult are well supported and guided to help them achieve success. The outdoor areas are used extensively; for instance, the Nursery children are free to move to and from the indoor classroom to the 'builder's office' and 'beach hut' outside.

Good teaching and lots of exciting things to do enrich the children's experiences and add to their knowledge and understanding of the world, from using the camera and computer to playing with the construction toys and train tracks. Communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills are promoted effectively through practical tasks. The areas for practical drama activities are too small, however, and do not have a sufficiently high profile in the classrooms to help children increase their language and writing skills through play. Children's creative and physical skills are good. They manipulate pencils, crayons and paintbrushes confidently and manoeuvre wheeled toys with dexterity. The provision is led and managed well by the EYFS leader who has a clear idea of how well the children are doing and what needs to be done next. She keeps a careful eye on children's progress and knows that most reach the expected goals by the time they reach the end of the Reception year, and a few exceed them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give all children clear targets for mathematics, and for some children include specific targets on individual education plans to help them behave really well.
- Provide more opportunities for practical drama activities and writing in the EYFS.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave at the end of Year 4. From starting points that are similar to those seen nationally, children make good progress and extend their skills effectively. Children who find learning more difficult make good progress, and those who are talented or more able do particularly well in Years 3 and 4. The results of the 2008 national assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards were slightly above average overall in 2008. There has been a rising trend over the last three years, although the results vary from year to year due to the small numbers in each cohort. Girls still perform slightly better than boys but the gap has closed since the last inspection when this was an issue for the school to address. Traditionally, standards in reading and music have been strengths of the school and this is still the case. Most children attained the expected Level 2 in writing last year and a good proportion reached the higher Level 3, whilst the summer-born children also did well in the assessments. However, fewer children than nationally attained Level 3, and the school has rightly identified that mathematics is an area upon which to focus.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children love school and have an excellent enjoyment of learning. Attendance and punctuality are good, and most children behave well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Children are very caring towards each other and look after the younger ones cheerily as 'buddies'. They know right from wrong and get on well together in lessons and at playtimes. Those in Year 4 are particularly mature and confident; for example, they lead the daily 'Wake and Shake' sessions in the mornings and take on other responsibilities very willingly, such as feeding the fish and acting as class monitors. Children know how to stay safe and healthy and develop excellent skills to contribute to their future economic well-being. The eco and school councils work very hard to make sure that the school community does all it can to conserve the environment and improve the provision. Children are very aware of the need to save energy by monitoring electricity usage and carbon emissions. They are proud of their efforts to sustain the environment by composting waste and litter-picking. Excellent links with the local community include tree planting and participating in the village open garden day.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Learning is promoted effectively by good quality teaching that builds well on children's knowledge and understanding. Lessons are planned carefully to make sure that all children are catered for with work that matches their needs, and those who require additional help are guided and supported well. The most able children are challenged consistently to aspire to high standards. Good relationships between adults and children motivate learning, and teachers make effective use of a wide range of resources, including computers and electronic whiteboards, to make learning interesting. Marking is of a high-quality, and staff give children clear pointers to help them improve their work and tell them how well they are doing, although they do not yet give children any targets in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Children receive a well-rounded education through a good curriculum that focuses effectively on developing their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as creative, physical and musical talents. The school is still developing its use of the recently introduced appealing commercial materials for linking subjects together. The school also promotes children's thinking skills in philosophy sessions in Years 3 and 4, and all children have good opportunities to learn French. Personal, social and health education and citizenship help prepare them very effectively for their future lives. A wide range of extra-curricular activities includes gardening, choir, yoga, chess, art, sporting and musical events, as well as guitar and violin tuition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff take good care of the children and the school has robust arrangements for safeguarding them. It carefully checks that all adults are suitable to work with the children and has good systems for ensuring health and safety. Children who find learning hard are given good support

to help them and there are excellent partnerships with parents and external agencies to further aid learning. However, some of the individual education plans do not identify clearly enough how children can improve their behaviour and social skills. Academic guidance is good. The school has developed its assessment procedures well since the last inspection to include a formal system for tracking progress. The headteacher provides staff with a clear analysis of this data so that they can introduce intervention strategies when necessary. Children know their literacy targets well but they do not have any specific individual targets for mathematics to help them understand what they need to do to get to the next level. Recently introduced strategies for helping children to assess their own work are being used successfully.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides excellent direction for the school. His good leadership and management are pivotal to the good achievement of the children and the school's welcoming, friendly ethos. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher who is a good role model for her colleagues. The subject leaders, senior leadership team and governors play an important and influential part in monitoring and evaluating the school for the benefit of the children. The leader for mathematics is developing her role to help her monitor provision more effectively across the whole school. Community cohesion is excellent because the school is at the heart of the local community and it strives to extend its links nationally and globally by supporting registered charities at home and helping children in Kenya and working with some in northern France. Parents are appreciative of the school and say that they feel very valued: comments such as, 'a wonderful school', 'supportive, enthusiastic teachers' and 'an extremely approachable headteacher' sum up the views of many. The school evaluates its performance very effectively and has a good development plan to help it prepare for its future as a full primary school in 2011.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	1
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 ¹ reached by learners	2
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

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

11 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Kedington Primary School, Haverhill, CB9 7QZ

Thank you for being so helpful and making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. I was very impressed to hear that you are so eco-friendly and take such great care of your school. Well done everyone!

Here are some of the things I found out.

- You go to a good school and achieve well.
- Many of you say that you love coming to school and really enjoy learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you know how to stay safe and healthy.
- Your parents are very impressed with the school.
- The teaching is good and all the adults take good care of you.
- There are plenty of things to keep you busy during lessons and in the after-school clubs.
- The school is well led and managed.

I have asked your teachers to do a few extra things to help you by:

- giving all of you some targets in mathematics, and help a few of you to behave really well
- helping the youngest children to practise their writing more often when they are playing.

Mr Woodward, the staff and governors all want the school to become even better and I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard, especially in mathematics.

I wish you all a Happy New Year!

Best wishes

Dr Anna Coyle

Lead inspector