

King's Forest Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131507
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	328602
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Isobel Randall

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	388
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Reed
Headteacher	Eileen Whiting
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Station Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 4PQ
Telephone number	01454 866466
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school serving an urban area to the north of Bristol. It opened in September 2007 by amalgamating the two schools that it replaced. In June 2008, the school moved into new premises built in the grounds of one of the former schools. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. Most of the pupils are of White British origin. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school whose performance is showing signs of improving. Staff and pupils of King's Forest Primary School have, in a short time, created a happy and harmonious community. The two previous schools have united well. All take pride in their new school. Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of what the school is doing for their children. As one parent wrote, 'The staff motivation and morale is amazing. They all have worked hard making King's Forest happen.' Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because they enjoy the varied and exciting activities afforded them by the school's good curriculum provision. Pupils like taking responsibility. For example, their eco-council meets to improve the school's already excellent environmental awareness. Consistent with the school's recent 'Healthy Schools Award' and 'Activemark', pupils take part with enthusiasm in a wide range of sports and clubs. Good teaching in the EYFS ensures children achieve well. As a result, from low levels of attainment when they start school, they reach standards that, although below the expected levels, are much improved by the time they start Year 1. Throughout the rest of the school, teaching is satisfactory in the main, but sometimes good and occasionally outstanding. This leads to the pupils making mainly sound progress, with standards remaining slightly below average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave at Year 6. Too few pupils reached the higher levels in these subjects in the end of Year 2 and Year 6 national tests. While teachers plan lessons that match pupils' interests and help them enjoy their learning, too often the work provided does not challenge the higher attaining pupils sufficiently. This is the main reason why standards are not as good as they could be. In addition, the school has rightly identified that there are particular weaknesses in mathematics where pupils' basic skills in number work and their ability to solve problems are insufficiently developed. The school has already begun to address the weaknesses in mathematics and there are early signs that strategies to improve things are starting to work. Support for pupils' academic development is satisfactory. Teachers' marking in English and mathematics gives specific advice to help pupils improve. In some classes, teachers make effective use of pupils' targets to accelerate the progress of all individuals. However, this is not consistent practice across the school and, as a result, not all pupils know how well they are getting on or what they should do to improve. The leadership and management ensure that the staff have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Within their development planning they have rightly placed the main focus on the need to improve pupils' achievement. This clear focus along with the good team spirit and commitment evident amongst the staff shows that there is sound capacity to underpin future development. The school makes good use of partnerships with the local community, the local authority, external services, and a new cluster of local schools.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children entering the EYFS with very low level skills make good progress, ending the year still below but nearer to nationally expected levels. This is the result of good teaching. Children settle well because of the good arrangements for their induction. They continue to feel safe and confident because of productive relationships coupled with robust procedures for their welfare and safeguarding. The area is well organised, making good use of well chosen resources. In this exciting and nurturing environment, children enjoy learning. Responding to adults' high expectations, they learn to work independently. There is a good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities to choose for themselves. Children behave well, showing good

levels of concentration for so early in the school year. These positive outcomes are the result of good leadership and management. The leader's recent evaluation of the EYFS through focused observations has identified that middle attaining children need greater challenge, while planning needs to relate outcomes more clearly to success criteria.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving number skills and problem solving.
- Raise the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils to increase the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Improve the use of pupils' targets so that all pupils know exactly what to do to improve. 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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They enter Year 1 with standards below those expected. Standards are below average throughout the school in English and mathematics. However, there are early signs that the rate of progress is beginning to accelerate, especially in Years 3 to 6. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in 2008 were the first to be involved in national assessments and tests. The provisional outcomes for both of these year groups were below expectation, especially at higher levels. The school recognises the need to provide greater challenge for the more able pupils. Also, pupils' number work skills and their ability to solve problems are weaknesses in mathematics that have been correctly identified by staff. Work has begun to address these areas. Girls perform slightly better than boys, but not more so than nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, together with those who speak English as a second language, make the same progress as others because of effective individual and group support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' real pride in their school is a major factor in their good personal development and well-being. 'This school is unique!' said one pupil. They enjoy occasions, such as the community day and open evenings when they can show their school to others. Older pupils welcome extra responsibilities, for example as form captains, information and communication technology (ICT) technicians and sports leaders. They enjoy caring for EYFS newcomers. The eco-council advise on energy saving, while the school council use their own budget, for example to buy playground equipment. Most pupils take part in structured activities at breaks and lunchtimes. They speak highly about the wide range of team sports and well attended extracurricular clubs. Although they are aware of healthy diet, this is not reflected in the content of packed lunches. Pupils feel safe and behave responsibly. They report their confidence that staff deal well with the very little bullying. There is clear awareness of right and wrong. Pupils gain a good insight into and understanding of the views and beliefs of people from a range of different cultural backgrounds. They have good knowledge of other cultures, for example through their links with schools in Africa and Europe. Although the amalgamation of two schools means that some now travel twice as far to school as previously, the below average attendance rate has improved over the last year. Opportunities to take responsibility, coupled with their average standards in basic skills, give pupils a sound preparation for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the main, but sometimes good and occasionally outstanding. In the best lessons seen, interesting and enjoyable activities were matched well to pupils' needs and interests. Teachers generally explain learning objectives and instructions clearly. Staff form good relationships, managing classrooms well so that pupils behave responsibly. Teaching assistants give good support to individuals especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that these individuals progress as well as their classmates. However, despite the good features, there are too many lessons where teachers do not set work that provides sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Some of these pupils spoken to commented that the work was too easy for them. Teachers regularly set targets for pupils. However, they do not always make sufficient use of them in lessons. As a result many pupils are unclear about how well they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. Most teachers use marking to give useful information and advice to individuals, but they do not always check that pupils have followed it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum has begun to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. They enjoy topics that provide opportunities for them to expand their learning in English, mathematics and ICT. This approach is helping to boost pupils' motivation. Work in science has led the way in developing an active, problem-solving approach that is now pervading other subjects. Staff correctly identify that this approach is not yet sufficiently developed within the curriculum planning for mathematics. The curriculum is broad, offering, for example, French and Japanese lessons. Staff organise a rich range of extra-curricular visits, visitors and contacts with schools in other countries and continents. These experiences provide well for pupils' understanding of communities within the school, locally, nationally and across the world. Pupils take pride in their eco-school that demonstrates care for the environment and allows them to suggest improvements. There are good opportunities for sport and exercise.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school cares for and supports pupils well. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The overwhelming majority of parents are rightly confident that their children are well cared for and safe in school. The wider school community has been carefully nurtured by close and frequent contact with parents. All safety and child protection procedures are fully in place. Staff create an atmosphere in which every child matters. Learning support staff, well trained and well deployed, provide help in class and in small groups that effectively allows pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to progress at the same rate as others. When pupils need particular help, the school makes good use of outside expertise. Year 6 pupils report that they have already been advised and supported about moving on to their next schools. Whilst pupils have targets set for them in literacy and numeracy, these are not always used effectively by staff to help pupils know how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is a real strength in leaders' tireless work to create a harmonious school from two very separate establishments. As one parent said, 'The school is at the centre of the community.' Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, self-evaluation has been sharpened to ensure that pupils' achievement is given full emphasis. Governors have supported the move towards the new school well. They receive reports about standards and discuss them. Middle leaders have identified areas for improvement in their own subjects. The extended leadership team's responsibilities for areas of the Every Child Matters agenda have contributed well to the harmonious nature of the school. They have worked hard to put in place the large range of initiatives required in a new school. The school has a satisfactory development plan that has some good initiatives laid out to enable improvement. However, some of the actions lack full clarity. Individual action plans vary in their format, with some, but not all, having effective arrangements for monitoring their impact. Following the recent move into the new building, leaders' focus on the need to eradicate areas of underachievement is beginning to show an impact. The role of middle leaders in monitoring teaching and learning is developing in that they have clear direction for developing strategies to raise standards. Senior leaders, aspiring to high standards and achievement, now know where the school needs to go.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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

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

3 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kings' Forest Primary School, Kingswood, BS15 4PQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed meeting all of you, and were very impressed by your good manners. We thought you all behaved very well. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school, and we could see how much you like your beautiful new building.

Your school is satisfactory, and it does some things well.

- It is a really friendly place where people get on well with each other.
- You take pride in being an important part of the community. You told us about many ways in which you are able to work and play together, from breakfast club in the morning to all of the clubs and sports that you like so much.
- Your teachers do a satisfactory job of helping you to learn, and they ensure you enjoy the work that you do.
- Your parents also told us that they like the school very much.

Here are some things that could make your school even better.

- We have asked your teachers to help you to improve your number work and problem solving skills in mathematics.
- Some of you told us that you found a lot of the work easy. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all of you are challenged, so that more of you will reach the highest levels.
- We have asked the school to ensure that full use is made of the targets you are set so that you have a clear idea about how well you are getting on and what will help you improve even more.

You can help them by reading what they write about your work and using their ideas to help you to improve. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Isobel Randall

Lead inspector