

Kingsthorpe Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133732
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	328740
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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)	195
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	John Baines
Headteacher	Elizabeth Smorfitt
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Knights Lane Knightsthorpe Northampton NN2 6QL
Telephone number	01604 714223
Fax number	01604 792708

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils are White British and about 10% are from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. A smaller proportion of pupils than is typical have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) enter the Reception class, initially on a part-time basis, at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. Within a few weeks, they attend full time. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in 2008. The headteacher, with a newly appointed assistant headteacher, took over responsibility for the school this September. There is a privately run pre-school on the school site.

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. As a result of the satisfactory education provided, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Children make a sound start in Reception and continue to make expected progress throughout the rest of the school. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. In some classes, too few pupils exceed standards expected for their ages, especially in writing and mathematics, because they are given too little extra challenge and guidance. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because teaching assistants often provide additional support. Reading is given a high priority and as a result standards in reading are above average. Many parents make a helpful contribution to their children's progress and enjoyment of reading.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher has made a good start and has won the support of staff and governors. She has introduced much better ways of monitoring the progress of pupils. The information gained from this monitoring is analysed and beginning to be used to allocate additional support to those who are at risk of falling behind. Parents and carers are supportive of the school, particularly of the way that pupils are taught to behave well and act politely. Because the headteacher has quickly gained a clear understanding of what needs doing to take the school forward, the school improvement plan concentrates on the most important areas for development. Subject coordinators and governors are aware that they take too limited a role in monitoring and evaluation. Some useful work is underway to extend the role of subject coordinators, especially in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT).

This is a happy school and pupils enjoy their time in it. They appreciate the good range of interesting clubs and visits which enhance the school's curriculum. Although the school's satisfactory curriculum is broad, often interesting and mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, this is not always the case for the more able. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils show sensitive consideration for others' safety and feelings, and they are friendly, polite and helpful. Teaching and learning, as well as care, guidance and support, are satisfactory overall. Too few pupils are clear about their learning targets and on what they need to concentrate to improve their work further. This restricts the extent to which they are able to take responsibility for their learning.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Parents are pleased with the way that children are welcomed and settled into Reception and treated sensitively by staff. Staff give high priority to promoting children's personal welfare. They help children quickly become confident in working and playing together so that they enjoy school. Children behave well and know class routines. Most enter Reception with the knowledge and skills expected of their ages. Due to satisfactory teaching, they make expected progress in all areas of learning and most reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year. There is an appropriate balance between indoor and outdoor activities and also between activities that are adult-led and those that children select from a range provided. However, teachers' planning does not always clearly specify what learning is intended when children are working and playing independently. This means that adult intervention sometimes lacks focus and this slows children's progress. The leadership and management of Reception provision is satisfactory. Staff cooperate effectively and show a sound understanding of what

improvements are needed. Improved ways of teaching letter sounds have been introduced recently and these are helping pupils develop their skills and confidence in reading unfamiliar words.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide extra support and challenge to help more pupils to attain standards above those expected for their age, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work and are helped to take more responsibility for their learning.
- Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation, especially by subject leaders and the governing body.

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

Recent national test and assessment results, school records and pupils' work show that standards are average overall. Most pupils attain nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. The achievement of most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but a few more able pupils do not reach their full potential by attaining the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics, because they do not receive additional guidance or challenge often enough. Progress is satisfactory overall but best in reading in which a good proportion of pupils exceed nationally expected standards for their ages. Progress in writing is satisfactory but opportunities are missed to promote better progress by developing specific writing skills in subjects other than English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and their positive attitudes can be seen in their relationships with each other and the confident way they relate to adults. Pupils listen well to each other and to their teachers and, from Reception onwards, cooperate very well in group work. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. They value the wide range of opportunities they are offered, particularly in sport, and have a clear understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in keeping fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy participating in the daily 'Activate' sessions in class. Most pupils attend school regularly but levels of attendance are only average overall due to the irregular attendance of a few pupils. Behaviour is good in classes and around the school, and pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and follow established classroom routines. They feel safe and say that there is always an adult who will help them, and that problems are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. They take the opportunities offered to reflect and develop opinions. Their understanding of what it means to live in a multicultural society, although satisfactory, is a less well developed aspect. Although the school council is active, opportunities for pupils to take responsible roles in school or in the wider community are limited. Their key skills in literacy and numeracy, together with their confidence

in relating to others, satisfactorily prepares them for their next school and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

All teachers manage pupils very well and consequently behaviour is good and relationships are excellent in lessons. Teachers plan interesting activities but in some classes teaching is not sufficiently fine tuned to meet the full range of learning needs in the class, especially the needs of those capable of harder work, and this occasionally slows their progress. Too few opportunities are provided, especially at the end of lessons, for pupils to assess and analyse their work to help them see where they have made mistakes or where they should concentrate on improving their work in the future. Teaching assistants often provide sound guidance to individuals or small groups of pupils who find learning difficult. Sometimes, however, when the teacher is talking to the whole class, teaching assistants are not deployed fully to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad range of interesting learning opportunities that are enriched by a wide range of extra clubs and activities. Pupils are especially keen to participate in the good range of sporting opportunities and are proud of their considerable success in competitive sport. Provision for music, including instrumental teaching, is extensive and taken up by a large proportion of pupils. Lessons such as French add further variety and interest to the curriculum. Although the curriculum for English and mathematics is satisfactory, the school has only recently begun to review its curriculum in the light of revised national guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy. Consequently, planning for literacy and numeracy does not always ensure that pupils can build on their prior learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is rightly proud of its caring ethos. Adults lead by example and, as a result, there is a calm atmosphere and relationships are excellent. Safeguarding procedures and risk assessments are secure. Vulnerable pupils are well supported by the school and appropriate outside agencies, for example through regular visits from the school nurse.

Academic guidance is less effective than pastoral support. The new headteacher is aware that the quality of academic guidance is a barrier to improving achievement and some useful initiatives are now being introduced. The use of academic tracking is recently much improved. Assessment information is beginning to be used to enable appropriate support strategies to be put in place for those who are not doing as well as they should. However, too many pupils remain unclear of what they need to do to reach the next level and are unsure of their learning targets. Classroom displays lack guidance for pupils as to how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Recently improved monitoring and evaluation procedures have provided the new headteacher with an accurate view of where improvements are needed. She has a good sense of what is most important and is already beginning to develop the key aspects requiring attention. The school is therefore in a sound position to continue to improve in the future. There are some inconsistencies in aspects of teaching throughout the school, such as in the way that pupils' work is marked. This is due to a lack of follow up checks by leaders to ensure that all staff adopt a similarly effective approach.

Although all subjects have designated coordinators, their role in monitoring, evaluating and improving provision and standards in their subjects is underdeveloped. Governors have a reasonable overview of where improvements are needed. Their ability to monitor and compare the performance of the school with other similar schools is limited by a lack of training in understanding the data on pupils' progress and its importance in relation to the school's effectiveness. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion by developing pupils' skills forming harmonious relationships very effectively. However, the headteacher is aware that pupils' knowledge of traditions and cultures of minority ethnic groups in modern Britain requires development.

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?	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?	3
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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	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	3
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?	3
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?	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

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

7 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Kingsthorpe Village Primary School, Northampton, NN2 6QL.

Thank you all for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit and a special thank you to those who talked to us about school life during their lunchtime.

Yours is a satisfactory school that has begun to improve recently.

We found your school a happy place where people get on well and treat each other politely and with respect. You make satisfactory progress in your work overall, and you are doing well in reading. Many of your parents help you improve your reading by hearing you read at home. New children in Reception are helped to settle in quickly and are already on the way to learning to read, write and count.

You behave well, feel safe in school and know that adults in school look after you well. Some of you take on additional responsibilities for helping the school run smoothly and you join in with community activities.

You and many of your parents told us that you regard your school highly and appreciate the work the staff and your headteacher do. We saw that you enjoy school life and most of you attend regularly, well done! Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to improve the school and know that there are some things that still need to be done. To help, we have asked them to do the following things:

- help more of you to reach higher standards in mathematics and writing
- help you have a clear understanding of how to improve your work so that you can take more responsibility for your learning
- help adults who lead subjects and governors become more involved in checking up on how well the school is doing.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler Lead inspector