

# King's Wood School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	133756
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	328752
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Sparks
Headteacher	Miss Enda Gormley
Date of previous school inspection	05 July 2006
School address	Hollis Road High Wycombe HP13 7UN
Telephone number	01494 521401
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and group activities and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and the chair of the governing body. They observed the school's work, analysed 40 questionnaire responses from parents and looked at the data collected by the school about the pupils' progress, their records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and scrutiny of the pupils' work. A sample of pupils' work was also inspected.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progressing?
- Are learning and progress in English and mathematics improving securely and quickly, particularly for pupils from Pakistani backgrounds?
- How well do the teaching, the curriculum, guidance and support take account of the needs of groups and individuals?
- What steps has the school taken to improve attendance and how successful have they been?
- How effective are leaders and managers at all levels in bringing improvements in the outcomes for pupils?

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than average. Seven out of ten pupils come from minority ethnic groups; four out of ten pupils are from Pakistani backgrounds. About half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average. Far more pupils than usual have statements of special educational needs. The school has a 'Language Additionally Resourced Provision' for 15 pupils who are taught within mainstream classes. Over one third of the pupils have learning difficulties which is a high proportion. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is greater than in most schools. Most members of the teaching staff have been appointed in the last three years; three appointments have been made in this academic year.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is made in the Reception classes. A pre-school is housed within the school but is not managed by the governing body and was, therefore, inspected separately. Building work is taking place and plans are well advanced for the school to take children into Nursery classes from the age of three.

## Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

### Main findings

The pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has fluctuated markedly over the last three years. Results of national tests in English, mathematics and science have, generally, been much lower than average. The quality of learning and progress is satisfactory. Pupils contribute willingly to lessons and most concentrate well on the tasks their teachers set them. Given the low starting points of many pupils and the higher than usual proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, they make the progress expected of them, and some make good progress. Progress and learning are improving securely.

The teaching is successful in helping the pupils to move forward at the expected rate and in some classes particularly effective teaching results in learning which leads to pupils making good progress. In others the focus on all pupils' learning is not as sharp. Consequently, not all year groups are making progress beyond that expected to ensure that attainment rises rapidly. There has been a considerable turnover of staff in recent years, which has interrupted the pace of improvement. Senior leaders focus on improving areas of weakness in the teaching and make effective use of coaching and additional support where necessary. This is beginning to have the intended impact on pupils' progress.

The headteacher has established a positive ethos in which the wide range of opportunities available to the pupils and the strong care, guidance and support they receive result in many good outcomes. For example, pupils feel safe, behave well, have positive attitudes to being fit and healthy, and make a good contribution to the school and local communities.

The deputy headteacher's skills, knowledge and experience of school improvement give the senior team a clear insight and direction, which are resulting in the improvements in progress that are evident in many pupils' work. The drive to raise attainment is bringing secure improvements. This is confirmed by the increasingly sophisticated tracking of pupils' progress. However, some inconsistencies remain in the accuracy of assessment.

The school evaluates the impact of the many steps it takes to bring improvement. However, the governors and some staff are not sufficiently involved in distilling these evaluations into a sharp profile of the school's performance.

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.

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - continuing to increase the proportion of good teaching
  - ensuring that all lessons focus sharply on pupils' learning.
- Ensure that all assessments are consistent and secure so that teachers and senior leaders can accurately evaluate the progress that pupils are making.
- Extend the involvement of staff and governors in evaluating the performance of the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3
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Most lessons are well organised so that pupils learn and make the progress expected. However, some lessons are not as sharply focused on learning as others. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, clear steps to success helped pupils to structure their learning and make good progress, whereas in the introduction to a writing activity in Year 2, too little account was taken of what pupils' had achieved in the last lesson. As a result, not enough emphasis was placed on what the pupils needed to do to enhance their learning and make good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that some variation in progress remains, but overall it is increasing securely and at a faster rate among older pupils.

The quality of learning and progress in lessons is satisfactory. Pupils behave well and contribute to discussions and often respond to their teacher's questions with enthusiasm. They concentrate well on the tasks their teachers set them. As a result, current progress and learning are improving securely.

Following an increase in 2007, results of national tests at the end of Year 6 fell sharply to be very low in 2008. The school's data show that attainment has improved this year but is still below average. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average. From low starting points when they enter the school, pupils are making secure progress and achieving satisfactorily. Initiatives such as Reading Recovery and one-to-one tuition are helping small groups and individual pupils who are falling behind to make up lost ground. The tracking of these pupils' progress shows that some have made particularly good progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily. However, those who have statements of special educational needs do better because of the high levels of effective support that they receive. The special educational needs coordinator is rightly focusing on improving the progress of those pupils who have less severe

difficulties.

There is no significant variation in the progress and learning of different groups pupils in lessons. Pupils get on well together and cooperate appropriately on group tasks and activities. In 2008, pupils from Pakistani backgrounds did not do as well as other groups. However, in the previous two years this group of pupils did better than others and currently the profile of their performance does not differ markedly from that of other groups.

The school takes appropriate steps to tackle unnecessary absence. The school has worked with parents and the community to reduce the number of extended trips overseas. Absences are routinely and rigorously followed. In the last year these steps have brought a modest but important improvement in attendance, which is now broadly average.

In discussions, pupils are very clear about how to stay safe and the importance of a healthy diet. School meals are of excellent quality and greatly enjoyed by the pupils, teachers and inspectors! The pupils' personal qualities are being developed well through a wide range of interesting activities which they appreciate and enjoy, such as gaining self-confidence by appearing in a visiting circus and attending lively and thought-provoking assemblies.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## How effective is the provision?

Lessons are usually well resourced and teaching assistants well deployed, so that pupils make at least satisfactory progress. The teaching assistants often provide good support that enables individuals to have full access to lessons and activities.

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<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

Occasionally, teaching assistants are too prescriptive in their dealings with groups and restrict the opportunities that the pupils have to work things out for themselves.

The school has improved how teachers mark the pupils' work. There are examples of good and effective marking where pupils' progress has benefited and their work improved. However, these improvements are not entirely consistent across the school; nevertheless, they are contributing strongly to the secure improvements in pupils' progress.

The curriculum is well organised and extensively enriched by visits to places of interest, events at school and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many of these opportunities add to the good progress that pupils make in their broader personal development. The many additional activities designed to increase the achievement of groups and individuals illustrate how well the curriculum is personalised for those who need it. In most lessons the tasks the teachers set are modified for the range of abilities within the class. The school is making increasing use of a range of strategies such as reading recovery and one to one tuition led by teachers outside normal school hours.

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The most vulnerable pupils are well supported through good links with external agencies. Those who have statements of special educational needs receive carefully tailored support that allows them benefit from lessons in mainstream classes. Links between the language support staff, the special needs coordinator and the teachers are particularly effective in ensuring that these pupils play a full part in all aspects of the life of the school. Behaviour is well managed and positive attitudes are strongly encouraged.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

## How effective are leadership and management?

Progress and learning are improving because of the drive to raise attainment. Although there have been many changes of staff in the recent past that have interrupted progress, the determination to improve is secure. Weaker teaching has been tackled so as to ensure that pupils make at least the expected progress and there is a clear ambition to make sure that all lessons are good. However, some monitoring of lessons is not sufficiently focused on learning to guide the teachers as to how they might accelerate the pupils' progress. Subject leaders systematically monitor the pupils' work. Under the guidance of the deputy headteacher this has become more incisive and teachers receive frequent feedback about where improvements can be made.

A new system for tracking pupils' progress provides very useful information, but its accuracy is not yet fully consistent: currently the analysis of the performance of groups is limited. Nevertheless, the resulting analysis shows very clearly those pupils who are making good progress and those who are not making as much as expected. This leads to better use of target setting, which is being used effectively to improve different groups of pupils' progress and raise standards.

Governors have increasing access to the data on the school's performance at the end of each key stage. While they receive drafts of the school's self-evaluation documents, they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the school's performance. The procedures for checking the safety of pupils are good.

The school has examined how it promotes community cohesion and has an action plan for its further development. While the promotion of community cohesion locally is strong, opportunities for pupils to gain a broader national and international dimension are planned but not yet implemented.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a sound start in the Reception classes. They settle in quickly and are keen to learn. Children play together well and are very well behaved. They enjoy their learning. Data show that children's attainment when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage is below that expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and thinking skills and in personal social and emotional development. Overall they make satisfactory progress and at the end of Reception reach the levels expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development; physical and creative development; and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their levels of attainment remain below what is expected in communication, language and thinking skills and in numeracy.

Staff provide well for children's welfare. There is a coordinated approach to using the indoor and outdoor learning areas. The outdoor area is well laid out to promote



children's learning and children respond well to the opportunities it affords. Both inside and out children access a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication and language skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Phonics (the learning of letters and sounds) are taught daily. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear. While adults regularly assess what children know, understand and can do, and plot these observations against the Early Years Foundation Stage profile, they are on occasions too generous in their judgements, and consequently children appear to be achieving better than they actually are. In addition, the progress of different groups of children is not tracked or analysed.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The school clearly enjoys the confidence and support of those parents who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English. The inspectors agree with these views.

The rate of response to the questionnaire was lower than in most schools.

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Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King's Wood 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 inspection team received 38 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 268 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	8	2	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.



06 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of King's Wood School, High Wycombe, HP13 7UN

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to me and my colleagues. You are able to learn in a very friendly atmosphere where the adults provide good care and support for you. You behave well, and work and play together very sensibly. You know who to talk to if anyone causes you to be unhappy, and are confident that any misbehaviour is dealt with quickly and fairly. The teachers make lessons interesting. They mark your work and often make comments to help you to improve.

You are making the progress expected of you, and some of you are doing well. You concentrate on your work, and the progress you make is speeding up. We would like to see you all making good progress. This is also the aim of the headteacher and teachers. So we have asked them to continue to raise attainment in English and mathematics. We have also asked them to check that their assessment of your progress is always accurate. There have been a number of changes to help groups of you do better, such as one-to-one tuition. The school looks at these developments to see how effective they are. We have asked the staff and governors to become more involved in checking how well the school is doing, so that they can make more precise plans to improve further.

The school provides a good curriculum with a wide range of opportunities for you, both in and after school. Your involvement in many of these opportunities, and the good support that the school provides, result in good outcomes in your personal development. You have a very clear understanding of the importance of staying safe and of a healthy lifestyle.

We enjoyed being in your school, and hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Parker  
Lead Inspector

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