

Kingsmead Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	134336
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	328892
Inspection dates	4–5 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Andree Keddle

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)	211
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	Mrs S Whitehead
Headteacher	Ms Catriona Stewart
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dukes Way Kingsmead Northwich Cheshire CW9 8WA
Telephone number	01606 333470
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Age group	4–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Update on report

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsmead Primary School is broadly average in size. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low. The school population is mainly White British with a very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly in line with the national figure. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Inclusion Quality Mark, Fair Trade School, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Becta ICT mark and Eco Schools Green Flag 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Since its last inspection, Kingsmead has continued to improve. It now provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The headteacher has a very clear vision for school improvement, which is well communicated to all members of the school community. She holds very high expectations for pupils and these are well understood by parents, pupils, staff and governors. Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement. The school provides a very caring and inclusive environment in which all children flourish as individuals and make good progress in their learning. Parents and carers greatly value the high quality of care and the good teaching that support their children's outstanding personal development. A typical parental comment was: Kingsmead is a school where all children are seen as individuals and will be given every opportunity to thrive in a safe, supporting and nurturing environment.' This results in pupils who have excellent attitudes to learning, behaviour and attendance. Furthermore, they have an excellent sense of responsibility and understanding of citizenship and a well developed appreciation of environmental issues.

Pupils attain above average standards by the time they leave the school. The school's records show that pupils' progress is good and is improving. Pupils are set challenging targets and the school checks on their progress frequently, ensuring that they stay on track to meet these targets. Specific needs of individual pupils are catered for very well. This is a particular strength of the school and contributes well to pupils' progress.

The curriculum is outstanding, with an extensive range of enrichment opportunities, which include educational visits and visitors and extra-curricular activities. For example, during the inspection, pupils were seen attending a French Club, working with the local plantation manager on investigative science activities and performing Christmas carols in the school band.

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is seen in their high levels of enthusiasm and motivation. They have a strong sense of belonging and know that their opinions count. They take on a range of responsibilities very well, such as becoming members of the school council and eco-group and helping younger pupils in Reception, as 'buddies.' In its day-to-day work, the school reflects its clear aims that are grounded in a commitment to the environment and the development of pupils' personal responsibility as citizens. As a result, pupils have an excellent understanding of environmental issues and the eco group leads the other pupils in reducing the consumption of energy and resources.

Teaching is good and the majority of lessons are good. A significant proportion of lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding, but some were satisfactory. In the most effective lessons, there was a fast pace and staff used probing questions very well to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. Activities were well structured and challenging to ensure that all groups of pupils made at least good progress. Where teaching was satisfactory, some pupils were not sufficiently challenged; the pace of learning was slower; pupils were less attentive and sometimes the learning activities were not closely matched to the objectives.

The procedures for self-evaluation are strong and the school has outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is outstanding. Children enter the school from a variety of settings and have skills that are broadly typical for children of their age. They make excellent progress and leave the Reception class with skills and knowledge well above those expected for their age. Rigorous assessments of children's learning by all staff are used effectively to ensure the tasks set by teachers closely match the developing learning needs of all children. Relationships between staff and parents are excellent and parents contribute to the assessment of their children's developing skills. All welfare requirements are in place.

Exemplary teaching and a well planned, stimulating learning environment ensure that children learn extremely well and develop good independent skills. Excellent links are made across the six areas of learning and children are given many opportunities for investigative work. As a result, they are highly motivated and involved in their learning. The outdoor environment is very well resourced and is used very effectively to extend children's learning. There is a good balance between teacher led and child-initiated activities. All staff ensure that children understand their activities and feel secure in classroom routines. They communicate high expectations for children's behaviour and provide excellent pastoral care. As a result of these strengths and the supportive environment, children's behaviour is exemplary.

The leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding. All staff have consistently high expectations and use assessment rigorously to identify each child's exact learning requirements in order to match the activities to their needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that the proportion of good and outstanding teaching is greater.
- Improve pupils' progress so that it is more consistent across classes.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for children of their age. They make outstanding progress in the EYFS because of the stimulating curriculum and excellent teaching. Most children exceed the standard expected for their age by the end of the Reception year.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, progress varies; it is not equally good in all year groups. The standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average and have been so for the last three years. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have attained standards which are above the national average. The school's own records show that the current Year 6 pupils are working at a standard that is above average for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported and make equally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is seen in their work and in their outstanding cooperation

with each other. Their cooperative work in groups and pairs enhances their learning. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in classes and around the school because the staff set very high expectations for behaviour and instil a sense of responsibility into each child. Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils are excellent. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school and have a strong sense of belonging which is reflected in their outstanding attendance. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning in lessons and that homework is fun. Pupils have an excellent commitment to all matters relating to living a healthy lifestyle. For example, they have great enthusiasm for physical education, extra-curricular sport and healthy eating.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community through their highly attuned understanding of the need to save energy and take care of the natural world. They show high levels of commitment to becoming good citizens by taking responsibility for their own actions. Pupils are confident and know that the school listens to them and gives them opportunities to participate fully in key decisions. For example, the school council members were given a budget to purchase playground equipment. They interviewed each possible supplier and questioned them about the materials used and their impact on the environment in order to make the best-value purchase for the school, taking account of environmental issues as well as cost. The pupils on the eco group and on the school council take their roles very seriously. The high academic standards pupils reach, combined with their very well-developed sense of responsibility as citizens, mean that they are well placed to achieve economic well-being in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall. There is a significant proportion of teaching that is outstanding and a small proportion that is satisfactory. The best lessons are characterised by excellent feedback to pupils, which ensures that they know what to do next to improve their work. A key feature which aids this improvement is the quality of pupils' self evaluation and shared assessment with their fellow pupils. In addition, teachers use questions well to evaluate pupils' learning and to help them think more deeply. In the satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning is slower and activities are not always as closely matched to pupils' learning needs as they are in the good and outstanding lessons. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is enhanced by their outstanding attitudes and keenness to contribute in lessons. Pupils cooperate extremely well in shared activities and this helps to consolidate their learning. Pupils benefit from well planned and well structured opportunities for discussions to extend their thinking and deepen their understanding. Teachers' excellent management of pupils' behaviour is based on high expectations and the use of praise. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. Well planned, cross-curricular topics make meaningful links between subjects and maintain high levels of pupils' interest. The curriculum is rich and varied. It has a strong emphasis on the creative arts. All pupils have the opportunity to play a musical instrument and approximately half achieve Grade 2 in instrumental music tests. Pupils' art work is of a very high standard. Much of it is very well displayed around the school and enhances the environment.

The teaching of Italian in Key Stage 2 is well established and pupils are very enthusiastic about the language. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended.

The curriculum has been very thoughtfully planned to provide good opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Furthermore, very good use is made of the local community and the expertise of local partners to make learning activities more exciting and meaningful for pupils. For example, pupils were observed dissecting owl pellets to learn about an owl's diet, in a lesson supported by the local plantation manager. The curriculum is fully inclusive and reflects the aims and ethos of the school. Effective links have been developed with two schools in South Africa and the pupils communicate through email. This has helped pupils to develop an understanding of the challenges faced by the children in the other school. School leaders place a strong emphasis on the need to take care of the environment. As a result, pupils have a highly developed understanding of environmental issues and a deep sense of their own personal responsibility as citizens.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the school's caring ethos and rightly see it as a strength of the school. All current government requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. Pupils feel very well supported and said that the staff know them well, listen to them, and support them with any problems that they have.

The systems to track pupils' progress are excellent. These are used very effectively to identify any underachievement and to influence the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils with other difficulties, such as emotional problems are also carefully identified and helped. Support is provided promptly where needed and its effectiveness is reviewed regularly to ensure that pupils are making good progress. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and are deployed very well. They give targeted support in lessons which is closely tailored to pupils' learning and/or emotional needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and senior leaders provide highly dedicated leadership and have an excellent, clear vision which is understood by staff, parents and pupils. This vision encompasses a commitment to pupils achieving well academically, and developing strong interpersonal skills and an awareness of citizenship. The headteacher has the trust and confidence of the school community. Links with partners, such as a learning network and the local plantation manager are very good and they enrich the curriculum. There is a clear strategy for school improvement based on very good knowledge of each child and their needs. Leaders and managers at all levels work in harmony, underpinned by the shared vision, school ethos and aims. Pupils respond to this with excellent behaviour and high levels of interest in their learning activities. Highly challenging targets are set for achievement and throughout the school there are effective checks on pupils' progress.

Well established processes for self-evaluation have led to the accurate identification of priorities for improvement. For example, in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007 and 2008, the girls did not achieve quite as well as the boys. This was recognised by the school and curricular topics were revised. Current tracking data shows that girls and boys are now making equally

good progress. Equality of opportunity is excellent. Although, the school has good links with two schools in South Africa, it has also identified the need to further promote community cohesion in relation to living in multi-cultural Britain. Plans to twin with a school with a greater proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are well-advanced.

Governors give an excellent balance of support and challenge to the school. They are well organised, work effectively with staff and monitor the interests of parents well. The substantial investment in the outdoor environment since the last inspection demonstrates that spending decisions have been carefully aligned to school improvement priorities. The school has excellent capacity to improve and provides excellent value for money.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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	1
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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave the other inspector and myself when we visited your school recently to see how well you were doing. Your views were very helpful to us. I was very impressed with you all and think that your school provides you with an excellent education. You make good progress because the teaching is good. Your behaviour, attendance and relationships with staff and each other are exemplary.

You have a superb school building and you take very good care of it. I noticed how you use resources carefully and switch off lights without being asked to when necessary.

These are some of the things that I think are outstanding about your school.

- You are confident to express your opinions and you take your responsibilities seriously, especially those of you who are part of the school council and the eco group.
- You develop a very good understanding of the need to care for the world in which you live.
- Your school helps you to make good decisions about keeping safe and healthy and being good citizens.
- You take responsibility for your learning and cooperate together on learning activities extremely well.

Your headteacher, staff and the governors want to make your school even better and I am sure that they will do so. I have asked that they concentrate on making even more of the teaching good and outstanding so that your progress is more consistent. Please accept my best wishes for the future and continue to work hard so that you can all achieve your targets.