

Kenningtons Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115306
Local Authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	338558
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Looker
Headteacher	Miss Jo Sawtell
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed 17 teachers. The inspectors met parents informally on the first morning of the inspection and held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, governors and pupils. The school's work was observed: this included scrutinising samples of pupils' work, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and safeguarding documentation. In addition, inspectors took account of questionnaire responses from 61 parents, 37 staff and 148 pupils.

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

- the impact of teaching and learning on progress, especially in Key Stage 1
- whether systems for checking pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection, so that assessment information is used to provide challenging tasks for all pupils including the most able
- how well leaders and managers are addressing the issues of fluctuating standards, the changing profile of the school and the needs of pupils who join the school at different times.

Information about the school

Kenningtons is a larger than average primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils who join the school at different times of the year is increasing and proportionally more than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and has gained the Activemark award. Almost all teaching staff have been appointed in the last two years.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a good quality of education, having improved significantly in the last two years. The quality of teaching and learning has improved in Key Stages 1 and 2. Attendance has improved as a result of developing closer links with parents and careful monitoring. A large majority of parents are positive about the school and one typically wrote, 'I am really pleased with my child's assessment results this year due to her maths and literacy set teachers. I feel they teach really well.'

The good leadership skills of the headteacher have united staff in a clear vision to improve the effectiveness of the school. With the deputy headteacher and inclusion manager and also a supportive governing body she has accurately assessed the strengths and weaknesses of all areas of the schools' work. New systems and initiatives are having a visible impact on pupils' achievement, which is improving. In a large majority of lessons observed, pupils were seen to make good progress because they are well taught and enjoy learning. Standards are still subject to minor fluctuations as a result of an increasing number of pupils joining the school after the normal admission time. Pupils who join the school at a later stage often have significant learning or emotional needs. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have improved and are average. In Year 6 eight new pupils were admitted. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are quickly and accurately assessed. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are helped to develop their skills and abilities soundly in all six areas of learning. However staff do not consistently extend learning by subtly intervening when children are engaged in imaginative play. Although learning flows between the indoors and outdoors, in Reception the outside area is not used to full advantage to provide a range of stimulating activities for children.

Behaviour has improved. Pupils meet the high expectations set for them and show positive attitudes in their lessons. The school meets safeguarding requirements well and good care, guidance and support are provided for all pupils. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They make a good contribution to their school and local community and show pride and enthusiasm in the responsibilities they carry out in class and as school councillors. A few older pupils have special training to take an active interest in pupils work as learning monitors. The curriculum has been reviewed and adapted successfully so that lessons capture the interest of pupils as well as developing their skills. Teaching is monitored well by senior staff, good practice is shared and new teachers are supported well. Progress made by pupils is tracked carefully through the school but assessment is not always used effectively in all classes, especially to plan tasks that fully extend pupils of higher ability.

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Leaders and managers at all levels are ambitious to bring further improvements to the school and their success to date is indicative of the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring assessment information is used consistently well in all classes to provide challenging tasks for pupils, especially those who are more able.
- Improve provision in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing the quality of interactions between adults and children to extend children's learning and imagination when they are playing
 - making more effective and imaginative use of the outside learning area for Reception children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their individual starting points. Standards declined in 2008 to below average in mathematics and low in English. The new headteacher and senior staff responded promptly to the challenge of improving achievement for all pupils. As a result of careful monitoring of pupils' progress, improvements to the quality of teaching, and the careful selection of strategies to improve pupils' progress, standards improved in 2009. Work in pupils' books and the school's careful tracking indicate that good progress has been maintained and attainment at the end of Year 6 is again average this year. The school receives increasing numbers of pupils each year in all year groups. Good induction arrangements and individualised and effective learning support for all pupils, including those who join the school later and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensures they also make good progress.

Subjects and themes have been selected which capture pupils' interest in lessons. In a Year 3 numeracy lesson, for example, pupils were very enthusiastic about a data handling task because it was based on goals scored by different nations in the world cup. Selection of interesting material is also evident in English where pupils' writing has improved through inspiring their imagination. Pupils enjoy their learning; the vast majority behave well and try to do their best in lessons because learning is fun. Emerging evidence shows that new initiatives to improve progress are having a positive impact and standards are rising.

Pupils' personal development is good. They are polite to adults and almost all are kind to each other and show concern for those around them and in their local community. They are enthusiastic in raising funds for charity and told inspectors about their concern for people in Haiti. Pupils are very clear about what constitutes a safe and healthy lifestyle. They enjoy sport in lessons and after-school clubs and this is reflected in the Healthy Schools status and Activemark award achieved by the school. Pupils' social and moral

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awareness is good but their cultural and spiritual awareness is less well developed. Pupils' good achievement, their enjoyment of learning and the good personal skills they develop ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

There has been a concerted and successful drive to improve the quality of teaching. New staff have been well supported and close, careful monitoring of teaching and learning has helped improve the quality of teaching in years 1 to 6. Good practice is identified in monitoring and shared. Teachers mostly have good subject knowledge. The purpose of lessons is explained and pupils are often encouraged to evaluate their own work at the end of lessons. Good questioning encourages pupils to explain their ideas and develop their speaking skills, and is used to assess pupils' understanding. In a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils were very deeply involved in a persuasive writing exercise using adverts and for their plenary session gave a 20 word summary of their evaluations of the adverts they had been reviewing. Classroom assistants are well deployed and work in good partnership with teachers. They provide good support for pupils who find

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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learning difficult. Assessment information is used well by senior staff to track pupils' progress across the school and identify quickly those pupils in danger of underachieving. However, use of this information is variable across classes and teachers do not always plan consistently well-paced lessons with tasks which stretch pupils, especially those who find learning easier, and so encourage them to make even better progress.

The curriculum has been successfully adapted to provide interesting learning experiences and support for pupils who find learning difficult. Pupils are clear about what they are to learn and through marking and their targets they are clear on how they can improve their work. Pupils are also encouraged to identify for themselves what could have made a piece of work even better. One pupil said, 'Our school is special because of the variety of lessons; it's fun. It gets better and better because our teachers are doing a good job for us.' Links developed across subjects add to the interest in learning. In a Year 5 class, work based on events in the 1960's spanned English, history, geography and art, and information and communication technology was used to research the Aberfan disaster before writing about it. Visits out of school, the contribution of speakers such as the local police officer, and also after-school clubs, bring learning alive outside of the classroom. The good support and care provided by the school are extended by well developed links with a range of agencies and services. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for some pupils. The role of the family support coordinator is especially valuable, for example in helping to improve levels of attendance, in linking with parents and carers and other services to support pupils and their families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is good and has resulted in the headteacher and senior leadership team taking rapid and effective action to reverse the previous decline in standards attained by pupils. The introduction of a range of well-chosen strategies, supported by staff training, and regular careful monitoring have led to clear improvements in the progress made by pupils. Issues identified in the last inspection have been tackled, or remain active work in progress. The school is a happy and harmonious community in which all pupils are valued and their well-being and progress is a priority. Staff work as an efficient team with a shared commitment to continue to improve the standards attained by all pupils. The roles and responsibilities of middle

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managers are under review and their development is a focus for the senior team, together with raising the attainment of more able pupils and improving the learning experiences for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Development planning is sharp and shared effectively with the governing body and teaching staff. It identifies clearly the priorities for improvement in the school.

A core of experienced members of the governing body has a good range of skills and expertise which are used to advantage in the school. New members of the governing body have not yet developed their expertise to offer effective challenge as well as support to the school. The partnership with parents has been strengthened, and parents and carers value the termly consultation meetings, regular information and the informal coffee mornings that have been set up in the last year. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a clear plan to develop community cohesion which is being refined and extended, for example, to promote pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of cultures and beliefs of communities in the United Kingdom. Safeguarding arrangements are well planned with efficient procedures and clear policies which are kept under review.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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 equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter both Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities that are below those of children of the same age. A sound range of planned activities ensures children make a good start to their learning. By the time they enter Year 1 most children have skills and abilities similar to other children of the same age although some remain weaker in

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elements of language and use of numbers. Staff help children settle quickly and encourage them to share and begin to express themselves clearly. Good social skills are developed, for example children learn to take turns and to cover their mouths if they cough or sneeze. Learning flows well between the indoor and outdoor learning areas and there is a satisfactory balance of adult-led learning and opportunities for children to develop their own games. The outside learning area for Reception children is limited in space and two different height levels make it difficult for children to use larger toys. However, the range of activities within the space available is limited and lacked opportunities for children to develop a range of creative play experiences.

The headteacher is acting as leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage and a new permanent appointment has been made for the start of the next academic year. Staff work as a cooperative team and leadership and management are satisfactory. Within the classroom, learning in small groups is managed well by staff so that children's needs are met effectively. However, when children are playing learning opportunities are sometimes missed, including development of speaking skills, because staff do not consistently engage them, encourage them to talk about what they are doing and help extend their learning. Information on their children's progress is available informally to parents and carers each day in discussions with staff but there is no formal reporting to parents and carers in Nursery.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one in five parents and carers replied to the questionnaire and a large majority were happy with the school. They are especially pleased that their children enjoy school and learn about a healthy life style. Parents believe the school is well led and managed. Only a few parents expressed concerns. These were about how well prepared their children are for the future, the progress they were making and being informed about this progress. In Early Years Foundation Stage parents and carers receive only informal information about their child's progress in Nursery but Reception and other areas of the school parents are kept well informed by consultation meetings and written reports. All children and pupils are well prepared for their next move. One parent wrote about transition from Nursery. 'My child had a difficult time going from nursery to reception. The reception teacher was more than compassionate in helping me to deal with this and worked closely with me to get him settled.' Inspectors' findings

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generally reflect parents' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kenningtons Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 315 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	63	20	33	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	55	22	37	5	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	55	23	38	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	58	19	32	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	55	24	40	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	43	28	47	3	5	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	53	25	42	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	33	29	48	7	12	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	35	35	58	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	28	37	62	2	3	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	30	34	57	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	52	26	43	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	58	23	38	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kenningtons Primary School, South Ockendon, RM15 4NB

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so helpful and polite. We really enjoyed our visit. We were very interested to learn about the Business Enterprise Scheme in Year 6 and the exciting projects you are planning. You told us how much you like your school and that you think your lessons are interesting and fun. You also told us how much you enjoy sports and all the things you know about keeping healthy. We agree with you that you go to a good school where there are a lot of exciting activities and people look after you well.

Your teachers encourage you to work hard and make good progress in lessons. You behave well and work sensibly. Your headteacher, other staff and governors all work very hard to make sure your school is a happy and successful place in which to learn. There are two things that we think could make your school even better.

For those of you who find learning easier we have asked your teachers to use what they know about how well you are doing to plan activities that help you make even better progress.

In Nursery and Reception we have asked the adults to talk more to children when they are playing to help them learn more and develop their speaking skills. Also we have asked that more thought be given to the way in which learning outside the classroom can be improved in Reception.

You can all help by doing your best and continuing to work hard in lessons. It was a great pleasure to visit your school and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead inspector

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