

Kemsing Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118277
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339179
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Arnold
Headteacher	Eileen Mumford
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Introduction

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents including school policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures and school improvement planning as well as pupils' work. Ninety-two parental questionnaires as well as 135 Key Stage 2 pupil questionnaires were evaluated.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of all pupils
- the extent to which leaders and teachers use assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning and raise attainment
- the effectiveness of leaders at all levels in monitoring and evaluation to improve teaching and secure pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Kemsing Primary School is an average-sized school with three buildings situated on one site. The pupils are mostly from White British families. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is greater than that usually found in primary schools. Most of these pupils have behavioural, social and emotional needs or moderate learning difficulties.

The school has been awarded Healthy School status as well as awards including amongst others the Gold Flair for Modern Foreign Languages, the Activemark, the Platinum School Travel Plan and the Kent Safe Schools.

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

This is a good school. It enables pupils to progress well in their learning and develop successfully as individuals. Pupils benefit from good relationships with staff, enjoy their learning and behave well. They talk with pride and enthusiasm about their school and the many activities and clubs they take part in. Because of the school's strong focus on pastoral care, pupils have an extremely good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated in their high take-up of clubs and healthy eating choices. All staff are effective in promoting pupils' good spiritual, moral and social skills but pupils' awareness of the diversity of other cultures, especially those found within the United Kingdom and the wider world, is not as effectively developed. This has been identified as part of the school's evaluation of its strategies for promoting community cohesion. The school has a good understanding of the needs of its community and pupils as well as having developed effective links with the wider local community and a French school. The school has focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching in its drive to improve pupils' progress. Consequently, pupils are progressing well in lessons that typically are lively, interesting and well paced. Pupils themselves comment positively on their teachers who 'give us lots of work that helps us learn new things'. The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have led the school's successful push to use assessment more rigorously to raise achievement. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing and are effective in sharing this information with pupils and their parents and carers. However, they recognise the need to refine the system further so that all pupils' work and targets are always sufficiently challenging to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can. Day-to-day assessment is good overall, although marking is better in English than in mathematics.

Following a dip in the standards reached by pupils in 2008, the school is now solidly focused on improving the learning experience for the pupils and has been successful in raising pupils' progress and attainment. Leaders at all levels are involved in formal self-evaluation, and, though several are new to these responsibilities, they have clearly established the school's key strengths and areas for improvement. Consequently, they have a good understanding of what it needs to do to improve further. This, combined with the school's effective action to bring about improvement since the last inspection, especially in the quality of the monitoring carried out by its leaders, shows that the school's capacity for further improvements is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain improvements in attainment in the core subjects by:

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- developing teachers' marking in mathematics to the same level seen in literacy so pupils understand what to do next to improve their work
- improving teachers' use of assessment to ensure that targets and lessons always challenge and engage pupils to achieve their best.
- Extend the school's strategy for community cohesion and for promoting pupils' cultural development by creating more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value peoples' backgrounds in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

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

Across the school, pupils achieve well in their academic learning as well as in their personal and social development. In Key Stage 2, the trend in attainment in the Year 6 national test results over the last three years has been broadly average, with a dip in 2008. However, the school and local authority data for 2009 showed that attainment rose with pupils achieving well to reach above average standards. This year, as lessons and pupils' books show, progress continues to be good. This pattern is seen across the school and is a result of the school's focus on raising attainment, but more importantly, on securing pupils' good progress and tackling previous underachievement. While pupils achieve well in all subjects, the school has identified that this is less strong in mathematics and, as a result, mathematics is a current focus for the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as others because of the effective additional support they receive in and out of the classroom. Overall, pupils make good progress because the school's successful analysis of assessment data accurately pinpoints any individuals or groups of pupils for whom progress dips and is able to provide additional targeted support where needed.

Pupils' enjoyment of school life is evident in their supportive approach towards one another which helps to make the school a safe and welcoming place. Pupils say they like coming to school because they are cared for and feel safe. As a result, although a very small minority of parents and pupils have concerns, the inspectors judge behaviour to be good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	1
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching quality is good in all stages of the school. The key features of this are the good relationships adults have with pupils and the interest and fun generated in lessons which help pupils to develop their positive attitudes to learning. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils thought about the areas they needed to work on themselves when evaluating the usefulness of a range of recently purchased games. Pupils were given every chance to talk about their learning and consequently were highly motivated and worked well collaboratively. Where teaching is less strong, though still satisfactory, the learning was more ordinary. Here, it took too long to explain tasks and pace dropped. Nonetheless, there were compensating factors that ensured progress was satisfactory. These included the good use of questions to encourage and coax pupils in their learning and the effective use of the interactive whiteboard to engage pupils' interest. Assessment is thorough and reliable and is used increasingly effectively to chart pupils' progress and to plan their next steps in learning. During lessons, adults regularly share verbally with pupils just how they can improve their work. In pupils' books where marking is best, pupils understand the next small steps needed to improve their learning and, as a result, their progress is accelerated. While the quality of marking in literacy is good, the school is aware of the need to extend this good practice consistently to mathematics and subsequently other subjects to enable pupils to see just how they can improve further.

The curriculum is successful in assisting pupils to build basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. It is brought alive by the visits, theme weeks and visitors who share their expertise with the pupils. The school's

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commitment to developing the pupils' skills in French is particularly strong and has been recognised with the Gold Flair award. Extremely good French teaching starts with the very youngest children and the school organises a popular residential visit to France giving the oldest pupils the opportunity to practise their French. The school has identified the need to build on this good practice and develop pupils' awareness of other cultures as effectively. The programme of out-of-school activities is good and the many sports clubs for all ages very effectively help to promote pupils' excellent attitudes towards healthy lifestyles. Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for well because the school works closely with parents and carers as well as outside agencies when needed.

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 headteacher, supported by leaders at all levels, provides a clear vision for how the school can move forwards. There is a positive team spirit and a real atmosphere of 'can do' amongst the staff, especially amongst senior leaders. As part of the school's development planning, leaders are involved in the analysis of the school's results and in monitoring teaching to see where it is most effective. As a result, all have a clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Governors play an effective role in checking how well the school is doing. Along with other leaders, they work well with parents and carers, successfully engaging them in a consideration of how the school is improving as well as in their children's schooling. All leaders support the drive for equality and diversity and play their part in ensuring that safeguarding guidelines are well met. Although pupils are encouraged effectively to play their part in the life of the school and local area, leaders have begun to evaluate the school's role in developing further community cohesion nationally and in the wider world where their work is currently only adequate. They are tackling issues raised, such as developing links with other schools.

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

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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 Reception with skills and understanding that are generally in line with those typically expected for their age and they quickly build in confidence, becoming keen explorers and learners by the time they enter Year 1. In the last two years, children's starting points have been above those typically expected and they have made good progress to start in Year 1 securely above average in all aspects of their learning. The curriculum is adapted effectively to engage learners. However, few children reach the very highest levels because there are times when opportunities are missed to capitalise on children's enthusiasm and accelerate learning even further for the most able. Nonetheless, teaching is good and the children learn effectively from a well-balanced diet of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Within the classroom, children are provided with a stimulating and safe environment in which to learn and grow. However, similar well-planned opportunities have yet to be developed in the outdoor learning environment and learning here is less rapid as a result. Staff work well with parents and carers to ensure there are good levels of communication, and children get off to a good start. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader uses assessment information effectively to promote learning and is able to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

The responses in a very large majority of parental questionnaires were positive and many of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the caring attitude, support for pupils and how much their children enjoyed the school. Typical comments were: 'Kemsing is a supportive school'; 'The school is working well with my child's needs'; and 'My child is happy, secure and confident.'

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over the lack of progress being made by their children. Inspection evidence showed that, while in the past there has been some underachievement, pupils are now making good progress overall. A few recorded concerns about several other issues, including the school's efforts to ensure that parents and carers are kept informed about pupils' progress and making sure pupils are well prepared for the future. The inspection found no evidence to support these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kemsing 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 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	59	37	40	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	55	41	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	27	65	71	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	37	52	57	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	44	49	53	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	38	51	55	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	46	49	53	1	1	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)	25	27	57	62	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	38	55	60	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	25	56	60	8	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	33	54	59	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	50	44	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	53	41	45	1	1	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kemsing Primary School, Sevenoaks, TN15 6PU

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear how much you like school and that your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do and get involved in. You all get on with one another and behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help to know how to be safe and is extremely good at helping you to understand and lead a healthy lifestyle. We agree that there are lots of interesting clubs and activities to get involved in and understand fully why you enjoy your exciting and fun French lessons so much.

Your school is good. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs and teachers are effective in helping you make good progress in your work, although you are generally stronger in literacy than in mathematics. The leaders in the school do a good job of running your school. They know just what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make even faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do three things:

- Make better use of information from assessments and marking to help you understand how to improve, especially in mathematics.
- Help you to understand more about different people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the country and the world.

You can help us by always using the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

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