

Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134687
Local Authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	341500
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2010
Reporting inspector	David Carter HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Margaret Morgan
Headteacher	Miss Alison Wilks
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent a large majority of their time looking at learning. They observed 17 lessons and visited 13 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the work of the school, and looked at: the school's most recent performance data and assessments; pupils' work; the school's development plans; and the 96 parental questionnaire responses.

- attainment on entry and the progress pupils make during their time in Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and more able pupils
- the quality of the curriculum and the extent to which it met the needs of the pupils
- the effectiveness of the centre's self-evaluation and its capacity to improve.

Information about the school

The learning centre opened in 2005, following the closure of three schools, however, it moved to its new building in September 2006. The learning centre combines a children's centre for the birth to five age range, with a learning centre providing primary education for children aged three to eleven. It provides a range of extended services, matched to the needs of the children, their families and the wider community. The learning centre has more pupils than most schools nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils herald from a White British background. Very few pupils are from a minority ethnic background or speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special education need is below average. The centre makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in Foundation Stage 1 and Foundation Stage 2 classes.

The learning centre holds a number of awards including: Healthy Schools Gold Award; Sportsmark; Outstanding Award for Outreach; and Architectural design of the year award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre provides a welcoming and caring environment where pupils are happy, feel safe, and make good progress in their academic and personal development. The centre has developed excellent partnerships with parents, who very much appreciate the outstanding care, guidance and support which it provides.

Teaching in the centre is good and as a result pupils are making good progress. Some features of teaching and learning are not yet consistently good, such as the opportunities for pupils to learn to work independently or the precise use of assessment to ensure that all pupils, especially the more able, are fully challenged. Opportunities for staff to share and benefit from the best practice in teaching are not fully developed. Pupils with special needs and/or disabilities are making outstanding progress. This is due to the closely targeted support which they receive. The low proportion of more able pupils is beginning to make good progress. Despite attainment being low in both English and mathematics, good progress from pupils' low starting points leads to satisfactory achievement.

Pupils enjoy coming to the learning centre and, consequently, attendance is above average. The curriculum is good, as it is based upon pupils' interests. Good partnerships exist with other groups and organisations which help to broaden the curriculum. This contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the learning centre and community, for example, through the student council. Although the centre is a cohesive community, there is a need for it to evaluate its work with greater rigour.

The leadership and management of the learning centre monitor closely the effectiveness of provision and pupils' progress. Consequently, they have an accurate understanding of the centre's strengths and priorities for improvement. For example, the school is aware of the need to develop community cohesion further by analysing its context more closely and evaluating its effectiveness more rigorously. The view of the centre, that 'everyone is a leader' is exemplified by the way in which staff are trained and mentored in order to undertake their leadership roles. This ensures that all members of staff contribute towards the leadership of the centre. This includes teaching assistants, who play a key role in supporting the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

The centre's good capacity to improve further is demonstrated in its success in bringing about improvements in the care, guidance and support for pupils, as well as accelerating academic progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - - refining the use of assessment by teachers to plan activities which more closely match individual pupils' needs
 - - ensuring that the work is always challenging, especially for the more able pupils
 - - providing pupils with more detailed feedback in mathematics.
- Continuing to improve the quality and consistency of teaching in all classes to that of the best practice by:
 - - ensuring that pupils are provided with more opportunities to work independently
 - - sharing the outstanding practice that exists within the centre.
- Improve the effectiveness of community cohesion by:
 - - providing a more detailed analysis of its context
 - - evaluating its effectiveness more rigorously in order to set appropriate priorities for improvement.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy their learning and they concentrate and respond well within their lessons. Pupils enter the centre with skills that are lower than would be expected. However, due to the good attention to their individual and personal needs, they make good progress during their time in Early Years Foundation Stage.

This is continued during their time in Key Stage 1 and, although attainment remains low, it is beginning to become closer to national averages. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, the careful planning of engaging activities enables pupils to make good progress. Despite this, current attainment remains low, but it is improving.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. This is because they receive regular high quality support in small groups or individually from a teacher or teaching assistant. Previous assessment information indicated that the more able pupils were not making as much progress as they should. Observations of lessons and a review of pupils' work show that this is improving.

Pupils are supportive of each other and they work and play well together. They are developing good social skills. Members of the governing body spoke proudly of the way in which pupils demonstrated their confidence and social skills when making presentations to visitors. The student council are fully involved in influencing the life of the centre and all pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The extent to which pupils feel safe, including their understanding of what constitutes unsafe situations, is outstanding. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and they enjoy taking part in additional sporting activities. The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills which will contribute to their economic well-being is satisfactory. They are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their understanding and awareness of business and enterprise and this is enabling them to develop their skills in financial literacy.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and there is some which is outstanding. Staff are aware of the different learning styles of their pupils, and they mostly use their assessments well to plan lessons which are suitably matched to their needs. In occasional lessons this information is not used precisely enough to ensure more able students are fully challenged. During lessons, there is good use of questioning in order to extend learning and to further refine pupils' understanding. Marking is used well in order to inform pupils of how to improve their work; however, pupils have a clearer understanding of their targets for improvement in English, than in mathematics.

Teaching assistants contribute strongly to the quality of learning, and their support impacts on the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as pupils with lower ability. In some lessons, the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, slowing their progress, and the opportunities for pupils to work independently are not consistently promoted across the centre.

The centre has developed a creative curriculum, which is based upon pupils' views and interests. It has worked well with partners in order to enrich the curriculum, and pupils

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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take part in a range of activities beyond the usual learning day.

Pupils value the opportunity to undertake visits, for example, they told us of how much they enjoy the opportunity to attend the residential visits that make a strong contribution towards their personal development. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their key skills, such as reading, writing and new technologies, in different subjects.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are given the highest priority by the centre, which recognises the importance of support for pupils' personal development as well as their progress. Each and every individual pupil is well known by staff and positive relationships with pupils' families enhance the support they receive in the centre. Well established partnerships with other agencies ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive closely targeted support.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are ambitious and creative in pursuit of their vision for pupils to overcome disadvantage and to do as well as they possibly can. The whole staff are united around this vision and in order to ensure continuity of purpose, the centre implements a bespoke and innovative approach towards developing leaders. The centre provides continual opportunities for staff to shadow the work of leaders at the next stage of development, so that when opportunities arise, they are well equipped to undertake their new role.

The leaders monitor and evaluate the work of the centre closely and they have a clear understanding of what the centre needs to do to improve. Detailed action plans, aligned to relevant professional development, are helping to drive improvement. However, the very best practice in teaching is not yet shared or used systematically to bring about further improvements in teaching. The centre has developed productive partnerships with parents and carers, who are strongly engaged in the life of the centre and in their child's progress and development. The centre keeps parents well informed about its work through its website and newsletters.

Leaders are committed to creating partnerships with other learning organisations, and this is making a good contribution towards pupils' personal development and well-being. Safeguarding arrangements are good and all statutory requirements were in place at the time of inspection. Where differences in performance between groups of pupils have

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been identified, the centre has put plans in place to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance of success. The governing body is involved in evaluating the performance of the centre and challenges and supports its work effectively.

Although the centre has a good understanding of its own religious, ethnic and socio-economic context, it accepts the need to evaluate its work more rigorously in order to better promote community cohesion. The centre provides satisfactory value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Nursery with low skills and development, particularly in communication and language skills. The effective liaison with parents and families, as well as with the staff in the children's centre, ensures that children settle quickly and become familiar with the routines of the Early Years Foundation Stage unit.

Children enjoy playing and learning in the stimulating and caring environment. The good, clear procedures for safeguarding ensure that children are kept safe and secure. The unit is well resourced and it is an exciting place for children to learn. They are happy and enjoy good relationships with each other and adults. Staff know the children well. They plan a good range of activities for the children which take account of their interests.

There is a good balance between the activities led by adults and those chosen by children. These are fun, extend children's skills and abilities, and ensure that they thrive in their learning. Children learn effectively outside, due to access to the well organised

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and stimulating outdoor area.

Adults assess children's progress carefully, recording their observations using a range of media. By the time the children enter Year 1, although their attainment is low compared to national indicators, progress has been good from their starting points.

Although the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has only been in post a short time, she has worked well with her team, and demonstrates good leadership of the unit.

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

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers, who made their views known to inspectors through the inspection questionnaires, are happy with their child's experience at King's Oak Learning Centre. Any concerns raised from the questionnaires were taken into consideration during the inspection.

A very small minority of parents and carers were not happy with their child's experience at the centre, raising concerns about progress and behaviour.

In particular: how the centre informed them about their child's progress; the ways in which the centre helped them to support their child's progress; the actual progress made; and how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour.

Inspectors found that progress is good. Also, that the centre makes good arrangements for informing parents of their child's progress and the ways in which they can support their child at home. Inspectors found that behaviour was good overall, and that the school had good systems in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 356 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	55	38	40	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	55	57	37	39	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	39	44	46	13	14	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	42	44	46	7	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	42	44	47	49	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	38	48	50	11	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	48	46	48	3	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)	30	31	54	56	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	39	49	51	7	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	32	51	53	10	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	32	53	55	9	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	38	40	49	51	7	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	45	43	45	6	6	3	3

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.



15 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kings Oak Primary Learning Centre, Barnsley, S73 8TX

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your learning centre recently and for contributing to the inspection by being eager to talk to us.

We were impressed with the way in which you answered our questions in such a friendly and polite way. We appreciated your support and this has helped me to write the report.

In the report, I have said that your centre is satisfactory overall but it has a lot of good features. We found that you are enjoying your learning and that you are making good progress. This is because the teaching is good. The staff have designed the curriculum well so that you will find learning interesting. In lessons, you listen well and try your best.

You are happy at the centre and feel safe because it provides outstanding levels of care and support. You behave well and make an outstanding contribution to the life of your learning centre, not only through the student council, but with the way in which you all enjoy taking responsibilities and becoming involved.

All the leaders in the centre are keen for you to do well and they agree with the following improvements which I have asked them to make. These include:

- helping you to improve your attainment in English and mathematics
- improving the quality of teaching so it is the best that it can be
- providing you with more opportunities to learn about your community.

You can help the centre by continuing to work hard for your teachers. Well done and keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely

David Carter

Lead inspector

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