

Kings Langley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117283
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	358117
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	449
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicki Cadogan
Headteacher	Paula Harris
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 30 lessons observing 16 teachers, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and members of the governing body, including the chair. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. Inspectors analysed 181 parental questionnaires, 94 responses to the pupil survey and 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well do teachers use assessment to inform lesson planning and support the learning of all pupils?
- Do pupils have sufficient planned opportunities to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their learning?
- Is the school building sufficiently in Years 3 to 6 on pupils' earlier achievement?
- What impact do subject and middle leaders have on supporting school improvement?

Information about the school

The community served by this well- above- average-sized school is becoming more diverse. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen to one-fifth. However, very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Few pupils have been identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school hosts a privately run breakfast and after-school club, which is inspected separately.

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

Kings Langley Primary School is improving under the determined leadership of the headteacher. She is supported well by a skilled leadership team and an increasingly effective governing body. Pupils make good and accelerating progress from their starting points so that attainment is above average and rising by the end of Year 6. Progress had been more rapid in the younger years than in Years 3 to 6, but as a result of the sharp focus on improving teaching across the school, this pattern is changing and pupils are building well, as they get older, on their earlier achievement.

The youngest children get off to a flying start in the Nursery and Reception classes where they flourish in a richly resourced and interesting environment. They make good progress, particularly in their personal development because of the focus placed by staff on encouraging their independence.

Pupils are prepared well for each stage of their learning including for success at secondary school. They work productively together in pairs and groups, learn how to evaluate their performance and that of others constructively and, when given the opportunity, are able to follow their own lines of enquiry such as when undertaking investigations in science.

Pupils develop their writing in a range of styles and subjects, but opportunities are missed for them to apply their ICT skills to support learning.

Teaching across the school is good and improving which moves the pupils' learning forward rapidly. Much teaching is interesting and generates pace to lessons, but does not always give pupils enough responsibility for shaping their own learning.

Assessment information is used increasingly effectively to plan lessons, but not always to extend the learning of the more-able pupils and challenge their thinking. Furthermore, teachers do not always adapt lessons in the light of the pupils' progress and responses to their questioning.

Teachers creatively link learning between subjects. They encourage pupils to have a voice in planning aspects of each topic, and bring learning to life by visitors to school and visits to places of interest. The pupils' experiences are further broadened by a wide range of clubs and other enrichment activities.

Parents and carers are very happy with the careful attention paid to safeguarding the welfare of their children. The pupils say how extremely safe they feel in school and have great confidence that any problem they take to an adult will be dealt with quickly and constructively.

The pupils' behaviour is good and they act in a very considerate manner towards each other. They are very polite, show great respect for adults and form trusting and lasting

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relationships. They are proud of their school and the contribution they make to its daily life.

Pupils' specific learning needs are identified early so that action can be carefully tailored to support their learning. As a result, pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress both academically and towards their personal targets.

The school has good capacity for sustained improvement. The headteacher has focused staff sharply on how they can become more effective practitioners. As a result, the school's performance has improved in many key areas since the previous inspection. Core subject leaders are playing a more influential role in supporting their colleagues to improve teaching and learning. Self-evaluation has become sharper and, by increasingly involving staff and governors, has become a more effective tool for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's planned actions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency with which teachers drive learning forward by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to shape and direct their own learning
 - ensuring that teachers maximise opportunities to reshape tasks during lessons
 - challenging all pupils, but particularly the more able.
- Provide systematically planned opportunities for the use by pupils of ICT within lessons so that they are fully equipped to use and apply their skills in the context of the 21st century.

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

Pupils greatly enjoy school, are motivated and respond well to their teachers. When learning is at its most effective, pupils work with interest and determination. They collaborate well when working in groups or discussing their ideas with each other. They are confident learners because their contributions are clearly valued by their teachers and respected by others. Most pupils concentrate hard in lessons and persevere with tasks even when they find them difficult. Learning loses its impetus and the pupils' concentration wanes on the few occasions when teachers do not engage and challenge them fully either through questioning or by providing interesting activities.

Most pupils reach and many exceed expectations by the time they move on to secondary school, as shown by Year 6 assessments in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are on track at least to meet the above average results of 2010. All groups of pupils, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly good progress and there are no patterns to any differences in attainment.

Pupils learn from a young age how to identify and cope with risks they might face including those posed by using new technology. They take great care to protect each other and look after anyone who is unhappy. The pupils' understanding of how to stay fit and healthy shows in their sensible eating habits and their readiness to participate in the wide range of sporting activities, and is reflected in having achieved Healthy Schools status.

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Pupils have an increasing voice in the school, take responsibilities such as playground leaders and peer mediators maturely and are keen school and eco-council representatives. They are strongly committed to fundraising such as for a local homeless charity. Pupils participate with enthusiasm in musical and other creative activities and events. They enjoy learning about other customs and reflect on their feelings and respect the feelings of others. Links with schools in Yorkshire and Gambia help them to see the world from a different perspective.

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	2
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	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	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

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

How effective is the provision?

Learning is mostly carefully structured, with tasks, activities and methods planned to meet the next steps in each pupil's learning. However, at times, teaching of the more able does not focus sufficiently on how to extend their learning, particularly but not only in mathematics. Additional adults are deployed well to support individuals and groups of pupils. When adopted successfully, paired and group discussions are used skilfully to promote learning and to generate confidence in the pupils to share and express their ideas. Teachers use questioning to generate pace to learning, but are less effective when they do not take time to check the pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking.

Regular reviews of the pupils' progress are used to plan support to help pupils catch up if they are felt to be in danger of underachieving. Marking and feedback are thorough so that pupils have a clear picture of how they can take the steps to meet their targets, but

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they are not consistently given the time to reflect on and respond to their teachers' comments.

The many interesting activities provided on a daily basis enrich the pupils' learning, broaden their experiences and support well their personal development. Modern languages, music, art and drama are all key features of school life. Sports partnerships as well as links with other schools support a wide range of much-valued clubs and extension activities for gifted and talented pupils. Effective additional programmes, including one-to-one tuition are provided when pupils are identified as falling behind their targets. Teachers focus on developing basic skills, but do not plan sufficiently for pupils to use new technology to support and extend their learning.

The school provides a caring and supportive environment for pupils, particularly where circumstances make them vulnerable. Carefully planned arrangements help them to settle in smoothly. Pupils are known as individuals and support is very carefully tailored to meet their specific needs. This support is built on a strong partnership with home and effective multi-agency support. Great care is taken to smooth the transfer of pupils between classes and help them to start each year and finally secondary school with confidence.

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 and senior leaders are ambitious for the school and set increasingly challenging targets by which to improve its performance. Their commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling any forms of discrimination is shared by staff. Careful checks are undertaken of the performance of individuals and groups to spot any potential underachievement. As a result of action taken, there is no pattern to any gap between the achievement of different groups and the school is a harmonious place in which to learn and work.

Senior leaders are acutely aware of teaching standards and where action is needed to strengthen each individual's performance. Teachers have developed their skills through focused training including observing and working alongside experts. Newly introduced systems for tracking assessments are starting to aid self-evaluation, but not embedded at all levels throughout the school. Planning for improvement has improved, but occasionally actions are not linked closely enough to the impact they are to have on outcomes for pupils.

Governance is good and has improved greatly under the leadership of the new chair. Governors have adopted more robust procedures to enable them to hold leaders to

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account for the school's performance, but as some systems are in their infancy their full impact is yet to be realised. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are implemented rigorously by staff and their impact carefully evaluated. Procedures include careful checks on staff and a regular scrutiny of the site.

The school is strongly committed to partnership working whether this is by strengthening the relationship between home and school, utilising the expertise of outside agencies to support the more vulnerable or bringing in other providers to extend opportunities for sporting activities. Close links are forged with home, starting from before children enter the Nursery, and are built on by activities such as workshops for parents and carers to help them to support their children's learning. Many planned activities have helped to promote greater community cohesion, based on a clear understanding of the context within which the school operates, although the impact of all activities have not been sharply evaluated.

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	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 settle quickly into school life because the classrooms are so welcoming. They develop and learn well in a rich and interesting environment where activities are carefully planned to meet individual needs. Adults use their regular assessments to plan activities to meet the next steps for each child and skilfully direct them towards those designed to meet their specific needs. Children behave well, show consideration for each other's feelings and form trusting relationships.

Learning flows smoothly between inside and out because the range of activities in the well-resourced and extensive outside area reflects those indoors. For example, opportunities for writing leaflets about butterflies inside are supplemented by chalks outside to stimulate boys to write about their garage. Children become increasingly

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independent and able to initiate their own learning. They play happily together and become engrossed in their work for long periods, such as when Reception children made rockets and robots out of junk materials. While all adults prompt and move learning forward adroitly, they miss at times opportunities for the children to answer their questions in detail.

Careful attention is paid to safeguarding the children's welfare, who consequently feel secure because they know there is someone looking after them. The adults work very closely as a team to identify where action can be taken to improve provision. Their performance is carefully checked and training provided where appropriate, including opportunities to learn new skills by observing each other lead sessions.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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 larger proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than is generally the case in primary schools. The level of satisfaction is higher than that typically found for primary schools in response to all but two of the questions. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents and carers, particularly that their children are helped to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle and are well taught. The inspection team also endorses the view of parents and carers that the school is well led and managed. Inspection evidence does not support the views of a small number of parents and carers, who believe that the school does not manage behaviour effectively, listen to or act on their views, prepare their children well for the future or enable them to make sufficient progress. Inspectors investigated these concerns through an examination of documents, discussion with staff and pupils and by taking account of the large majority of the views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kings Langley 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 181 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 449 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	49	83	46	8	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	46	93	51	2	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	30	121	67	5	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	30	107	59	18	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	33	112	62	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	28	111	61	12	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	31	111	61	5	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)	37	20	116	64	10	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	24	113	62	18	10	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	20	100	55	26	14	8	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	20	102	56	25	14	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	57	31	109	60	8	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	33	113	62	4	2	2	1

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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kings Langley Primary School, Kings Langley, WD4 8DQ

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We agree with your positive view of the school and have found that Kings Langley Primary is good and improving. You clearly enjoy school and the activities provided including visits to places of interest. Your teachers take good care of you and do the utmost to keep you safe. Your behaviour is good. We were impressed by the way you try hard to stay fit and healthy. You are also very aware of how to stay safe and learn how to cope with risks you might face. You clearly enjoy the work in your topics, particularly as you have helped in their design.

The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The rest of you make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make good progress because of the support you receive.

The two things in particular we have asked the teachers and other adults to do in order to make the school better are to:

- make sure that all lessons are as good as the best so that you make even better progress in your learning
- provide more opportunities for you to use computers in lessons.

All of you can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and improving your attendance further. Well done for showing such pride in your school and in your achievements.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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