

Kensington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102727
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	376755
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Howard

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	494
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Jill Pullen
Headteacher	David Barker
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 December 2008
School address	Kensington Avenue Manor Park London E12 6NN
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The team observed 25 lessons taught by 19 teachers. They met with pupils, members of the governing body, and various members of staff. They observed the school's work and looked at its documentation, including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and the 214 parents and carers who returned a questionnaire.

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

- The extent to which pupils' progress is accelerating, especially for boys and those who join the school partway through their education.
- How the school is improving pupils' attainment in reading.
- The quality of teaching within and between year groups.
- The impact of leaders' and managers' monitoring of teaching.

Information about the school

Kensington Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils who have a minority ethnic heritage and those who speak English as an additional language is well above average. Most pupils have Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or other Asian heritage. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although the proportion who are at school action plus or who have a statement is below average. There is a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the current Year 6. Nearly one quarter of pupils joins or leaves the school partway through their education. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend part-time in the nursery and attend Reception full-time in one of three classes. The school runs and manages breakfast and after-school clubs every day.

Since the last inspection, a monitoring visit by Ofsted in 2009 found that the school had made inadequate progress. Delegated powers of the governing body had been removed and an Interim Executive Board was appointed to fulfil the governing body's roles and responsibilities. The Board is currently working with a shadow governing body, which is due to take full delegated powers in September 2012. A new headteacher started in September 2010 in addition to four members of the senior leadership team.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Kensington Primary is a good, highly inclusive community school which has rapidly improved under the very strong leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders and managers. They are supported well by the members of the Interim Executive Board and the whole staff. The school provides a very caring and positive ethos and pupils develop a strong sense of respect for others. They enjoy coming to school and behave well in lessons and around the school. One pupil said, 'We're learning while we're enjoying.' Pupils are polite and welcoming. The school looks after pupils well and goes to great lengths to support them, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils feel very safe because the school's safeguarding arrangements are good, and parents and carers agree. Improved communication with parents and carers since the last inspection means that they now feel well informed about their child's learning and take the opportunities offered to them to support their child's learning.

Strong evidence from the school's own data and in lessons shows that outcomes for pupils are now good. Achievement is good and attainment in both English and mathematics, which had been low, is now average and improving. Boys in Years 1 to 6 make progress which is much higher than the national average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress relative to their starting points. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of effective provision and good teaching, although boys' attainment remains low because they do not readily take up opportunities to develop writing skills or make links in their learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress that is much better than their peers nationally. Patterns of performance are monitored effectively and teachers provide a range of effective activities to address any weaknesses identified. The quality of teaching is typically good, particularly in the nursery and in Years 3 to 6, enabling pupils to accelerate their progress. This is not consistently the case in Years 1 and 2, where the level of challenge is not always high and where pupils do not consistently know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. In the majority of lessons, there is a clear structure, good pace and pupils' work is marked regularly.

Other strengths of the school include pupils' good personal development and their willingness to contribute to others in and beyond the school. Teachers and support staff are very good role models and this contributes to pupils' personal development. The good curriculum is well adapted to cater for the needs of individual pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they are fully included in all aspects of the school. Effective partnerships support the school's drive for further improvement.

The school is well led and managed and has effective systems in place to monitor the quality of its work through good levels of self-evaluation. As a result, it knows its strengths and weaknesses and plans effectively to address them. Since the monitoring visit, there have been significant improvements in many aspects of the school's work, most notably the rate of pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and communication with parents and carers. Consequently, the capacity to secure further improvements is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, further improve the quality of teaching, especially in Years 1 and 2, so that all is consistently good and more is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge is sufficiently high for all pupils
 - ensuring that pupils consistently know how well they are doing and what the next steps in their learning will be.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, raise children's attainment, especially for boys, by:
 - encouraging children to engage in the activities that are on offer to develop writing skills
 - ensuring that adults consistently interact with children to develop language for learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills and abilities that are well below age-related expectations in all areas. By the end of Year 6, they make good progress and reach average attainment. They acquire sound basic skills and apply these well across a range of subjects, including in information and communication technology (ICT). For example, in one Year 3 ICT lesson, pupils were constructing right-angled shapes that linked to their previous mathematics work. Attainment in both English and in mathematics is now broadly average and rising, although in some years it has been affected by the high proportion of pupils who join or leave the school partway through their education. The school has implemented a range of support programmes to address this so that pupils have the opportunity to address weaknesses in knowledge; this is having a positive impact on closing gaps between the attainment of different groups of pupils. More able boys do especially well in mathematics.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive very effective support from teaching assistants in lessons.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. In one Year 4 mathematics lesson, a pupil said, 'Maths is good. It's fun. It's always like an interesting game.' Attendance, which was low, has improved rapidly as a result of the school's effective actions and is now average and rising. This, together with low levels of persistent absence, high levels of punctuality and good rates of progress, means that pupils are well prepared for the future. Pupils are very proud of, and respond well to, the opportunities offered for

them to make a positive contribution. Pupils’ views are highly respected by staff and consequently, the school council, with representatives from each year, is an important influence on decision-making. Trained peer mediators support other pupils and this contributes to how safe pupils feel in school.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned a questionnaire agreed that the school helps pupils to be healthy and this is achieved through the high participation in sporting activities, the range of clubs and the school’s focus on healthy eating. Pupils work harmoniously in different pupil groups and regularly celebrate the religious and cultural heritages within the local community and the school. For example, in a local performance of an operetta about journeys, in which every pupil participated, the focus was on celebrating diversity. Pupils particularly enjoy performing and creative activities. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment	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	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A systematic whole-school focus has been very effective in rapidly improving the quality of teaching during the last year. Teachers’ good subject knowledge, high expectations and very positive relationships with pupils have resulted in pupils making better progress. In the majority of lessons, time is used very effectively and resources, including new technologies, engage and motivate pupils. Pupils particularly enjoy using the interactive whiteboard. The availability of secure information on pupils’ progress ensures that teachers use it well to inform lesson planning. Pupils assess their work regularly, using simple learning checklists, known as ‘success criteria’. Teachers give good oral feedback during lessons and mark pupils’ work effectively. Teachers generally let pupils know the level of their work and give specific comments about the next steps, although this level of challenge for pupils is not yet consistent across all classes.

The curriculum provides opportunities for links between subjects and is enhanced by a range of activities before and after school. Good cross-curricular links provide crucial connections and contexts for pupils with resulting impact on the quality of learning. The range of activities and practical resources is effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language to make good progress. An effective range of provision supports pupils who may be underperforming, including small group support lessons in mathematics. Enhanced resources have supported the school’s focus on reading, and the introduction of guided reading sessions, which are taught well, is improving attainment. Regular daily sessions on linking sounds and letters throughout the school impact positively on accelerating progress in reading. Effective group sessions led by specialist support staff for targeted pupils also help to further develop reading skills.

The school’s breakfast club offers a meal in addition to games and activities before school. This, along with the after-school club, has a positive impact on the attitudes of pupils, their attendance and punctuality.

The school knows its pupils very well, provides a welcoming environment and its support for individual pupils is good. A small number of pupils with complex needs make good progress as a result of their enhanced provision. The school has robustly addressed attendance and, as a result, it is now average and improving. The help and guidance provided to pupils to support them into Years 1 to 6 and to prepare them for secondary school are good and pupils are confident that adults support them to make choices. Most parents and carers agree that their child is well prepared for the future.

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 has shown determination in driving rapid improvement. His shared vision has been enthusiastically embraced by the staff, who are well supported by senior and middle leaders and managers. The Interim Executive Board has been actively involved in influencing the strategic direction of the school and has rigorously challenged, monitored and evaluated the school’s progress, using an innovative and effective risk framework to identify areas of weakness and to prioritise actions. The school’s decision to focus on a small number of key areas has been especially effective in driving rapid improvement. Regular and thorough monitoring of teaching by senior and middle leaders and managers, together with an effective programme

of support, has rapidly improved the quality of teaching. Whilst more needs to be done to raise attainment further, there has been considerable improvement in the progress that pupils make. Leaders and managers now plan meticulously in response to accurate and regular self-evaluation.

The school promotes equal opportunities well. Although boys sometimes lag behind the girls in Reception classes, generally there are few differences in outcomes for groups of pupils noted in pupils’ work. Pupils’ talents are celebrated. They say that discrimination is tackled quickly and well. All pupils access the full range of activities that are on offer at the school.

During the last year, communication with parents and carers has improved and they now engage well with the school. The vast majority are very positive about all aspects, including how well the school is led and managed. The school offers workshops for parents and carers to help them support their child’s work in mathematics and these are very well attended. Partnerships with other schools and agencies are strong and these contribute to pupils’ improved outcomes. They are particularly effective in supporting the development of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

The good safeguarding arrangements result in strong child protection and effective risk assessments. There are secure arrangements for the vetting of staff. Pupils have a strong awareness of their socio-economic, religious and ethnic context in the local community and the school, as the school's promotion of community cohesion is good, although their understanding of the global community is a weaker aspect of their understanding.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the nursery with skills and knowledge that are very much lower than is

usually expected for their age. Outcomes are good overall, especially in the nursery. Children with English as an additional language make good progress, although girls often make better progress than boys. Children make strongest progress in physical development. They enjoy their learning, get on well with each other and respond well to consistently high expectations of behaviour and routines. Consequently, their behaviour is good. Established induction systems help children to settle quickly and safely and positive links with parents and carers make a good contribution to children’s personal and emotional development.

There is a varied and stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities and resources which promote exploratory learning and encourage the development of language. Letter sounds and early reading skills are taught effectively. Careful planning and placement of equipment encourage children to move freely about the whole unit and ensure good coverage of the curriculum, including activities that develop their number skills. This supports pupils’ development well. For example, a nursery child was playing well with older children in Reception, who matched her speaking skills. Adults promote positive attitudes to learning although they are not consistent in their interactions to move learning forward when children, especially boys, choose their own activities. This particularly inhibits progress in writing and language development. Children are safe because safeguarding arrangements are very secure. Leaders and managers are aware of strengths and weaknesses as a result of regular monitoring, and staff work well together as a team to plan activities that motivate children and lead to improved outcomes.

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

Just under a half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response rate that is above the average. The very large majority are positive about their child’s experiences in school. One parent, who was echoing many others, wrote ‘The school has improved greatly since the arrival of the headteacher. I have seen a transformation.’ Almost all say that their child enjoys school and most say that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. A few parents and carers said that the school did not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that communication with parents and carers has greatly improved and that there are more opportunities for them to become involved in decision-making, including through parent/carer forums.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kensington 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 214 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 494 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	127	59	82	38	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	115	54	90	42	4	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	102	48	95	44	9	4	5	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	40	108	50	9	4	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	94	44	100	47	10	5	3	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	85	40	112	52	9	4	5	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	92	43	111	52	6	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)	66	31	123	57	9	4	4	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	75	35	117	55	12	6	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	76	35	119	56	10	5	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	65	30	125	58	16	7	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	75	35	117	55	13	6	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	93	43	108	50	10	5	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kensington Primary School, London E12 6NN

You may remember that four inspectors came to your school recently. We very much enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Kensington is a good school. We could see that you are making progress in your lessons, that you behave well and enjoy your learning. You work well together and especially like performing and art activities. We thought that you reach a high standard in these subjects and we enjoyed looking at your displays around the school. We also enjoyed your chorus performance on the playground.

You are all doing much better in English and mathematics and although you all make good progress by the time you leave school, you could do even better in Years 1 and 2. We also think that boys need more help to develop their writing in Reception. In a few lessons, you know how well you are doing and what your next steps in learning will be, and when this happens, you make even better progress. We think it would help if you knew this in all lessons. Most of you told us that you feel safe in school and that you trust the adults. We think that the school cares for you very well.

We have asked the school to do two things that will help to make it even better:

- Help you to do even better, especially in Years 1 and 2, by knowing how well you are doing and what your next steps in learning will be in all lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, help you, especially boys, to do better by helping you improve writing skills and making sure adults help you make the most of the activities you do.

You can help by continuing to work hard in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard
Lead inspector

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