

# King's Meadow Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123011
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	395390
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Liz Kounnou

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	383
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Robins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tony Instone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Shakespeare Drive Bicester OX26 2LU
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	15–16 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395390



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Liz Kounnou

Additional inspector

Alwyne Jolly

Additional inspector

Jacqueline Lawson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 32 lessons, taught by 16 teachers. The inspectors listened to pupils read, and looked at samples of their work and samples of planning documentation. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and with staff, including the headteacher and senior leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a number of school documents, including the development plan, raising attainment plan, safeguarding records, attendance data, tracking of pupils' progress and local authority and other external evaluations of the school's provision. The inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by 191 parents and carers, 36 staff and 100 pupils.

## Information about the school

King's Meadow is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below average. Their needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties. Just over 5% are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with about one in ten being from a minority ethnic group. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- King's Meadow is a good school. It is not outstanding because some elements of teaching are not fully effective in promoting rapid progress for pupils.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is exemplary. Inspirational teaching and an exhilarating learning environment ensure that children make rapid progress in all areas of learning in this stage of the school.
- Achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good and improving strongly. Most pupils make good or better progress so that attainment is above average by the time they leave the school. A very few pupils with lower than average attainment make slower progress in some lessons.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils know how to succeed in lessons, and provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning. A few lessons are not matched well to the needs of some of the lowest attaining pupils. Although teachers regularly mark pupils' books, the quality of marking is inconsistent. It is better in English than in mathematics; however, not all comments provide specific advice for pupils on how to improve their work and reach the next steps in learning.
- The wide range of interesting activities plays a strong part in pupils' good motivation and interest in lessons. Pupils behave well in most lessons because they enjoy what they do. They say they have a lot of fun at school. Almost all pupils report that they feel safe in school, and the overwhelming majority of parents agree. Attendance is above average.
- Actions taken by leaders to improve the quality of teaching are effective. For example, pupils regularly discuss their work together as a result of a recent initiative to improve their speaking and listening skills. Leaders check pupils' progress robustly. They collect a wide range of assessment data and use the information they gain from this information effectively to secure improvement in the school.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, moving it from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that lessons are structured carefully to help all pupils reach the next steps in learning, in particular those with the lowest levels of attainment
  - ensuring that marking consistently provides specific advice for pupils on how to improve their work and reach the next steps in learning in both English and mathematics.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers report that their children make good progress at King's Meadow. Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of their learning. Attainment when children start school varies but is typically below that expected for their age. The consistently high levels of challenge give children a very solid grounding in using letters and sounds in their reading and writing. In Year 1, pupils build on these early skills extremely well in some lessons. The most able pupils quickly wrote down some questions to ask the Queen in preparation for writing a letter. They made really good use of their understanding of the way sounds and letters are linked (phonic skills) to spell the words and used a very good handwriting style to keep their work neat and tidy. They were inspired by the prospect of reading their questions to a surprise visitor, who some suspected may be the Queen! Activities such as these ensure that pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in learning to read and write. Handwriting is a real strength all through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in reading is above average.

Reading skills continue to develop well in Key Stage 2. The majority make very good progress in reading from their previous levels of attainment. Many pupils develop a love of reading because they hear a lot of enjoyable stories. By the time they leave the school attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. A group of Year 6 pupils explained that they really enjoy mathematics because they do a lot of puzzles. In Year 5, pupils had to think very hard to work out the missing numbers in prepared examples of addition and subtraction of decimals. The exercise required them to explain how they had worked out the puzzles and ensured that they thoroughly understood what happens to the numbers when adding or subtracting decimals using column notation. Their animated discussions greatly increased the levels of understanding.

School leaders have acted promptly to tackle a dip in achievement that occurred last year. Throughout the school almost all groups of pupils, including those learning English as an additional language, build on their prior attainment at a good rate from year to year. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly

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good progress overall. However, a few of the lower attaining pupils do not always make rapid progress because the tasks they are asked to complete do not consistently help them to reach their next steps in learning.

### **Quality of teaching**

Pupils say they do not get bored easily because teachers make lessons fun, and the overwhelming majority of parents and carers report that teaching is good. Attractive classroom displays show the wide range of activities that teachers provide in lessons to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many activities are designed to involve pupils in making decisions about their learning and, as a result, they are well motivated. Pupils have a lot of opportunities to talk to one another about their ideas and the best lessons provide structured opportunities for pupils to assess how well they have done together. In Year 4, pupils reviewed each other's work to see how well they had met the objectives for learning. Their mature attitudes and thoughtful comments showed how well they understood how to make their writing interesting to the reader. An innovative idea to provide pupils with checklists at the beginning of each new mathematics topic plays a strong part in showing pupils precisely what they must master to succeed in their learning. In some lessons teachers assess how well pupils are doing by stopping for a minute to review the key features of their work. This enables them to adapt their teaching rapidly within lessons to ensure that most make good or better progress. Nonetheless, there are occasions when the work is not planned appropriately to help those at lower levels of attainment to make the best progress. As a result, a small minority occasionally lose interest. A very few lessons are not effective because behaviour is not managed well and pupils lack interest in the work provided.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well. They regularly work in small groups and receive good support from well trained teaching assistants that help them to understand new ideas and master basic skills, such as how to use phonic skills in their writing. Reading is taught well across the school, typically in small groups where adults use good questioning techniques to help pupils develop their understanding.

Teachers take care to mark pupils' work, and some staff include well-structured comments so that pupils know what they have done well and how they could improve their work to reach the next steps in learning. However, this is not consistent across all classes. Some comments simply list activities pupils should complete rather than providing clear advice on how the work could be improved. Overall, the quality of marking is more effective in English books. Typically, marking of mathematics focuses on whether the work is correct and does not show pupils how to address misunderstandings.

Inspirational teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a wealth of exciting activities that develop all areas of learning. Children are fascinated by the tortoises they are studying. They are taught precisely how to use woodwork tools safely to create models. Learning outdoors is packed full of tempting challenges that

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develop high levels of cooperation and independence.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

A very large majority of pupils behave consistently well and have very good attitudes to learning. A pattern of good behaviour over time means that many pupils are uncomfortable with any transgressions. Although pupils, parents and carers agree that staff manage poor behaviour very well, some nevertheless raise concerns about the low-level disruptive behaviour of a very small minority of pupils. Pupils explain that anyone who behaves badly must take responsibility by explaining their actions both verbally and in writing. They say that it is rare for anyone to be sent to the headteacher. As a result of staff encouragement, the great majority of pupils manage their own behaviour well throughout the day.

The school takes active measures to prevent cyber-bullying so that pupils have a very keen awareness of the dangers involved in the misuse of technology. Pupils are confident that they can deal with any other forms of bullying by using their WITS. This system teaches pupils to keep themselves safe by: Walking away, Ignoring the bully, Telling an adult, and Staying away. Pupils feel safe because there is almost no bullying and any reported incidents are dealt with promptly and firmly. They have a well-developed sense of what constitutes all forms of bullying. Pupils are happy at school, enjoy learning and consequently their attendance is above average.

## **Leadership and management**

School leaders work diligently to secure improvement in the school. They promote equality by keeping a very close eye on how well all groups of pupils are doing. The recent introduction of meetings with teachers to discuss the progress of pupils in each class has had a marked impact on raising standards. As a result, leaders reversed the dip in achievement in 2011 so that pupils make good progress now in both English and mathematics. A further innovation has been for senior leaders to hold interviews with samples of children from each class, during which the children discuss the work in their books and talk about their learning experiences. This means that leaders have a very good overview of what is working well and where there is room for improvement.

Leaders at all levels contribute to professional development to ensure that the quality of teaching keeps pace with national initiatives. They work closely with other local schools, often leading initiatives. Information and communication technology is used very well to organise and share information among staff. Members of the governing body are well informed and use the insight they gain from this wealth of information to find out why some aspects appear not to be as strong as others. They play a significant part in the drive for school improvement.

Well-organised systems, that are checked by governors, underpin robust

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arrangements to ensure pupils are safe at school. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The happy atmosphere is supported by an exciting curriculum packed with extra activities for the pupils. Their favourite activities are the after-school sports clubs and the residential visits that take place for Year 4 and Year 6. The gardening club provides interest for those who prefer different activities, and their work considerably enhances the school grounds. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Although the majority of pupils are from mainly White British heritages, displays and artwork across the school reflect the wide variety of global cultures threaded through the curriculum. The curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is exemplary. It sparkles with stimulating activities and generates a lot of laughter and deep concentration. Children were completely engrossed in writing questions to ask the giant, remembering all the correct punctuation needed for a question, and using their skills to spell words such as dragon accurately.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of King's Meadow Primary School, Bicester OX26 2LU**

Thank you for making us so very welcome when we inspected your school. We really enjoyed visiting your lessons, talking to you and the staff, and looking at the work that you have been doing. We agree with you and your parents and carers that yours is a good school, with some aspects that are really excellent.

These are the things that your school does well.

- The activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are really exciting so that the children giggle a lot and work extremely hard.
- Most of you behave well and the teachers have some good systems to help everyone improve their behaviour and keep each other safe. We thought you were very helpful.
- You are doing well in reading, writing and mathematics. Your handwriting is particularly good.
- You enjoy your lessons, and told us that your teachers make lessons fun.
- You try hard to check how well you have done in lessons using the checklists the teachers give you.

Although the school is doing well, there are still things that it can improve even more. We have asked the headteacher and the governors to focus on these things.

- Make sure that the work in lessons helps all the pupils to reach the next steps in their learning so that everyone can make good progress.
- Make sure that teachers include some really clear guidance to help you improve your work and get to the next level in your learning when they mark your English and mathematics books.

You could help by reading the marking comments very carefully and trying hard to make sure you follow the teachers' advice.

Yours sincerely

Liz Kounnou  
Lead inspector

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