

Kings Langley Primary School

Common Lane, Kings Langley, WD4 8DQ

Inspection dates 3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's strong leadership provides clear direction and, supported effectively by the two deputy headteachers, has had a good impact on rapidly improving pupils' achievement.
- Governors are knowledgeable, articulate and very supportive. They are effective partners in challenging the school's performance, resulting in rapid improvement in pupils' progress and attainment.
- Relationships are a real strength throughout the school, as a result of the excellent focus on developing strong social and moral values. Parents are extremely supportive and value highly what the school provides for their children.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils listen exceptionally well in most lessons and are exceedingly polite to adults and to each other.
- Children get off to a good start to their learning in the Early Years. Good teaching ensures that they make good progress in developing their basic skills.
- All aspects of pupils' well-being and safety are a priority so that pupils learn in a happy and safe environment, which is free from pressure or stress. Pupils have great trust in their teachers.
- Senior leaders' rigorous checking on teachers' performance has led to consistently good teaching and increasing examples of outstanding teaching so that pupils achieve well from their individual starting points and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen rapidly.
- The effective, broad curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences across different subjects and contributes very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they are well supported by their teachers and the additional adults employed by the school who help them with their work. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and have very positive attitudes to learning. Handwriting and presentation are excellent.
- Pupils really enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers are adapting their teaching quickly enough so that the most-able pupils are routinely challenged at a high level from the start of every lesson.
- Questioning which challenges the most-able pupils to provide sufficiently precise answers to questions is not yet the norm in all classes.
- Subject leaders are not all using all the information about how well the school or specific groups of pupils are performing in reading, writing and mathematics, to ensure more rapid improvement in their subject or aspect.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, eight of which were seen together with the headteacher or a deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed pupils moving around the school, in the dining room, at break and lunchtimes, and in assembly. They listened to pupils read and examined work in pupils' books.
- Discussions were held with pupils, subject and senior leaders, the inclusion co-ordinator and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors looked closely at a range of documentation, including: the school's data about the progress and attainment of pupils, leaders' evaluations of the school's strengths and weaknesses, improvement plans, safeguarding policies, behaviour and bullying incident logs and records relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors studied the local authority's *Full Review of Behaviour and Safety* carried out in October 2014 and also recent reports from the local authority's School Improvement Partner.
- Inspectors took account of the 66 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and they spoke to a large number of parents.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 questionnaires completed by staff working at the school.

Inspection team

Nichola Perry, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vreta Bagilhole	Additional Inspector
Andrew Smith	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kings Langley Primary School is significantly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, less than one fifth of pupils in the school, is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding (additional funding given to schools for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in care) at more than one tenth of pupils, is below the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is for Reception children who attend full time and Nursery children who attend part time.
- The school has experienced significant changes in staffing and working arrangements since the previous inspection, which involve a number of shared posts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' rate of progress particularly for the most-able pupils, by:
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are routinely set more demanding work from the start of all lessons so that they are not held back by repeating what they can already do
 - increasing the level of challenge in teachers' questioning so as to encourage the most-able pupils to think more deeply and provide better thought-out and precise answers in lessons
 - developing subject leaders' knowledge about how well pupils in all groups are performing so that they have a more precise understanding of what they need to do to ensure pupils make more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- As at the last inspection, the vision and dedication of the headteacher is shared by all staff, governors and the pupils themselves. Ably supported by the two deputy headteachers, her outstanding commitment has steered the school through a particularly turbulent period without allowing this to detract from improving pupils' learning and progress.
- Procedures which check staff performance, including payments to reward good practice, are thoroughly checked against the national *Teachers' Standards*. These provide a regular and meaningful dialogue with staff and have led to improved performance and improved pupils' rate of progress. The process has been effective in helping underperforming staff to develop their skills. Staff value highly the additional training opportunities they have to help them improve their leadership or teaching.
- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of their roles and what they need to do next. Self-evaluation is accurate and planning for improvement identifies precise targets which help all staff play their part in raising standards and increasing rates of progress for pupils in all groups. Thorough and regular checking of teaching is continuing to develop good practice, in spite of changes in staffing, and is leading to more examples of outstanding teaching.
- Subject leaders, some relatively inexperienced, have played their part in ensuring that work planned for pupils, the quality of teaching and the monitoring of pupils' progress are all contributing to ongoing improvement. While they are aware of what needs to be done to improve further, more rapid progress is being hindered because they do not all fully understand whole-school performance data and what this information is telling them about the achievement of the different groups of pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is extremely well developed through the subjects and activities provided. While there is strong emphasis on English and mathematics and the development of basic skills, effective links are made between the different subjects so that pupils are being helped to see the relevance of what they are learning, and especially so in the newly planned curriculum. Music and art are particularly well represented with many pupils participating in singing and learning instruments.
- High priority is placed on physical education throughout the school and there are many opportunities for pupils of all ages to engage in a wide range of sports or activities. The primary sport funding is being used effectively to improve pupils' health and physical fitness. Staff skills are being enhanced along with additional equipment and funding of competition entries. It extends the range of physical activities available, including rugby, table tennis and volley ball, in addition to more traditional team sports.
- There are well-established links within the local and wider communities, including schools, churches and other places of worship for a range of faiths. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school places strong emphasis on supporting learning for all. Equality of opportunity and good relationships are fostered effectively and pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education and for life in modern Britain.
- Use of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is ensuring that they are able to learn and achieve as well as others so that the gap between their performance and that of other pupils is reducing.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and were found by inspectors to be effective.
- The local authority has provided an appropriate level of support for the school when it has been requested, such as the *Full Review of Behaviour and Safety* carried out in October 2014.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are articulate, forward thinking and fully committed to improving the school further. They know what the school does well and where further work is required. They have done much work to

further improve their role, through regular reviews of their performance, streamlining membership and a wide range of training. This has resulted in governors being better informed and able to challenge school leaders.

- Governors are supportive of the school and visit regularly, for example, to meet subject or other leaders, hold parental consultations or subject meetings, as well as attending many school performances or social events. In this way governors are kept fully informed about all aspects of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching, through their own first-hand experience of being in school, as well as through regular reports from the headteacher.
- Governors demonstrate a clear understanding of published and school data and the link between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Their management of the headteachers' performance is effective. Governors apply procedures, including payment used to reward good practice, and the need to link teachers' effectiveness to pupils' progress. They make sure that resources are spent appropriately, including additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and the primary sport funding, to provide maximum benefit for pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Much behaviour seen during the inspection was exemplary, in lessons, the dining room or moving around the school. Pupils, from the Nursery upwards, understand extremely well what is expected of them in this regard. The pupils themselves consider that behaviour for the majority of the school is good, but also that there are a few pupils who find it difficult to manage and be responsible for their own actions. They are very accepting of difference.
- Relationships throughout the school are a strength. Pupils listen well to their teachers and each other. They learn from an early age to be extremely polite so that it comes naturally to them, for example, to hold doors open, including for each other. They have exceptionally well-developed social skills and clearly enjoy conversing with everyone. They have such a level of confidence that even the youngest children are happy to instigate conversations.
- The excellent focus on developing strong social and moral values is evident throughout the school. Performing in public has a very high priority across the school. Every pupil is able to take part in the many events put on by the school. During the inspection, children in the Nursery and Reception classes put on two outstanding performances, thoroughly enjoyed by many parents and other family members. Behaviour was exceptional throughout these activities.
- The school provides a very calm atmosphere where pupils can learn without fear or stress. Pupils demonstrate great pride in their school, their uniform and their achievements, academic or sporting. They say they love coming to school so that attendance is above average, as at the last inspection.
- Lessons are rarely interrupted by poor or inappropriate behaviour. Only occasionally are there lapses in pupils' good behaviour, for example, when an activity does not motivate them sufficiently. This is because staff have very high expectations and encourage all pupils to make the right choices about their behaviour. Pupils are generally well motivated by the subjects and activities provided and are keen to learn and achieve well. They know how well they are doing and are increasingly learning to respond to their teachers' marking so that they can improve further.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Much work is done, for example, through the subjects and activities provided and through assemblies, to help pupils to learn how to be safe and keep each other safe. This has contributed strongly to pupils having a very good understanding of risk, while not making them fearful of taking risks. The school is a happy and safe place to be. Pupils say they feel safe and their parents, including the large number of parents spoken to during the inspection, overwhelmingly agree.
- Pupils say they have great trust in their teachers and other adults to keep them safe and to help them if they have a problem. They recognise that bullying occurs from time to time in schools but say that it is

not a problem that worries them. They have a very clear understanding of what bullying is and what is not bullying. Inspectors examined the school's bullying and behaviour procedures and the recording of any incidents and found them properly maintained and managed. All required actions are taken with involvement of parents and external agencies as appropriate.

- Provision for pupils who have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or who struggle with their learning for any reason, is good. Pupils' individual needs are identified quickly, including those who enter the school at times other than at the start of the year. This means that these pupils can learn as well as their peers and are not disadvantaged in any way. The school maintains excellent links with external support agencies so that specialist help is readily available. Parents are delighted with the excellent level of liaison and communication about their children's progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Ongoing checking on the quality of teaching by senior leaders is ensuring that teaching continues to be good, with increasing examples of outstanding practice. Assessment is accurate and teachers use this information well to plan and adapt activities to match the wide range of pupils' needs. This is helping pupils in all groups make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their various starting points. The school is making good progress in developing its future assessment arrangements.
- Learning is always well structured and supported by a wide range of resources to help pupils in all groups achieve well. The very strong emphasis on developing social skills is evident in every lesson: pupils are given many opportunities for sharing ideas with others, which is particularly supportive for pupils who struggle with their learning. Some good examples were seen during the inspection where this approach has given individuals enormous confidence to contribute to lessons.
- Not all teachers adapt their teaching quickly enough which is holding back the most-able pupils by repeating what they can already do. In some classes the most-able pupils are progressing at a much faster rate than elsewhere. This is because some teachers are very quickly assessing, at the start of lessons, that this group of pupils have clearly already understood what is being taught. Where this is happening pupils are promptly provided with activities at an appropriate level of challenge.
- Questioning and discussion are used well by adults. However, too frequently teachers are not probing pupils' answers and challenging them to provide more thoughtful and detailed responses, especially for the most-able pupils. Most teachers adapt their questioning skills well to take account of different pupils' learning needs. This is especially successful in helping lower-ability pupils access good learning and achieve well.
- Across the school, teachers have extremely high expectations about pupils' handwriting and presentation. These are a real strength and demonstrate pupils' huge pride in their work – also evident from discussions with pupils. Marking is also effective in reassuring pupils as to how well they are doing and precisely how they can improve. There is good evidence that this is starting an ongoing dialogue with pupils so that attainment, for example, in their writing is starting to rise at a more rapid rate than in the past.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In the past, pupils have not always achieved as well as they could and attainment has not been as high as it should be. Pupils in all year groups currently in the school are achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points which are mostly typical for their age. The proportions of pupils in all groups across the school who are reaching expected levels of progress for their age have risen rapidly, as have those exceeding expected levels. This means that more pupils than ever before are reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school, including Level 6.
- In 2014 attainment by the end of Year 6 was average in all three subjects. This was because pupils underperformed in the tests in spite of higher achievement through the year. Data the school holds shows that attainment for pupils in the current Year 6 is above average in all three subjects. Lesson observations and work in pupils' books supports this.

- Good provision for the most-able pupils ensures that activities are well adapted to provide challenging tasks. Pupils are benefitting from regular, additional sessions, including visits to other schools for specialist teaching where they work with other higher-achieving pupils. These have led to higher achievement for pupils in all year groups. School data, work in books and lesson observations support this. Opportunities to work at a higher level are sometimes missed, however, when pupils are not routinely challenged by more challenging tasks until later in the lesson.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils quickly develop their skills and a love of reading. The profile of reading has been raised significantly: improvements in the teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sound they make) has led to more pupils reaching the expected national level in the Year 1 phonics screening check. The teaching of reading across the school places strong emphasis on questioning, discussion and understanding of texts, so that pupils are being well prepared for the more demanding expectations of the higher levels.
- Senior leaders have taken action to rapidly improve teaching and assessment in Years 1 and 2. Accurate and reliable assessment and consistently good teaching have led to much faster progress in all three subjects. Attainment is now above average in both year groups. School data and work in books support this.
- Good provision and support meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs well. Close tracking of their progress means that individual needs are identified and additional sessions and support put in place early, therefore maximising learning opportunities. This is helping this group of pupils to achieve well from their various starting points and reach the standards expected, and frequently achieving better than this.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide a range of focused additional support for disadvantaged pupils. Although outcomes vary year on year depending on their individual needs, work done by the school is helping to reduce the gap between their performance and that of other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were in the region of one and a half terms behind other pupils nationally and their classmates in reading, three terms in writing and four terms in mathematics. School data, lesson observations and work in pupils' books show that pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach at least similar standards to their peers in all three subjects.

The early years provision

is good

- Parents are pleased with the good start provided for their children. They settle quickly and become happy, enthusiastic learners. The learning environment is motivating and well resourced and provides equally good learning indoors and outdoors. Adults have high expectations and set high standards so that children learn quickly how to behave, listen, share and cooperate with each other and their teachers.
- Children make good progress in acquiring basic skills. The proportion reaching a good level of development is increasing annually. Learning journals show good progress and contribute to the effective transfer arrangements into Year 1, so that teachers can build on the good progress made by the end of the Reception year. Phonics is taught well and prepares children well for learning in Year 1.
- Good leadership ensures accurate and robust assessment. Activities are varied, take good account of children's interests so that their natural curiosity is excited and maximised and provide a good level of challenge. Less-confident children or those with weaker communication skills also make good progress. Skilled adults encourage reluctant learners to join in and try different things so that they can become independent learners.
- Many planned opportunities help children develop their communication skills through play and work. Two stunning performances of the Christmas Nativity demonstrated outstanding success in developing children's speaking skills and confidence. One child, while getting changed after the performance, sat down with a great sigh and announced to everyone that, 'That was just the best day ever!'

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	117283
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	444088

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	480
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Nicki Cadogan
Headteacher	Paula Harris
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2011
Telephone number	01923 263321
Fax number	01923 263321
Email address	admin@kingslangley-pri.herts.sch.uk

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