

Kingsnorth Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118667
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291206
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Parker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Shorter
Headteacher	Claire Foinette
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001
School address	Church Hill Kingsnorth Ashford TN23 3EF
Telephone number	01233 622673
Fax number	01233 622673

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and pupil numbers have increased considerably since the previous inspection because of new housing. Most pupils come from privately owned homes close by. Very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds or have English as an additional language. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than generally found.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It has successfully developed a strong community ethos, which is particularly evident in school assemblies when parents, staff and governors join pupils in inspiring acts of worship. Pupils make good progress in their personal development and well-being in response to the high expectations of staff. They behave well around school and join in activities with enthusiasm. They have good attitudes to learning, work hard and cooperate well with others.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Children enter the Reception classes with standards that broadly meet national expectations. Resources for outdoor play have improved and provision is satisfactory overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. They make good progress in reading but do less well in writing, partly because they have too few opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects. The numbers reaching the expected level by the end of Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. The numbers reaching the higher level in mathematics have improved this year and are close to average. Fewer than average reach the higher level in science because the work set for more able pupils is not consistently challenging through the school.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons have a clear focus and resources are used well to catch pupils' interest and illustrate key points. Teachers lead class discussions skilfully so that pupils give thoughtful answers. Instruction and tasks are generally appropriate for pupils of average ability or below, but more able pupils are not always challenged as much as they should be. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is extended well through a wide range of exciting out-of-class activities that have a good impact on pupils' enjoyment. The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory, though the warmth of relationships between pupils and adults is a strength. End-of-year assessments give a broadly accurate picture of pupils' academic progress. The school has begun to assess progress in writing more frequently so that any pupils in danger of falling behind can be picked up at an early stage.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new senior management structure has strengthened teamwork. However, middle managers are not fully involved in monitoring the impact of provision on pupils' progress. Consequently, the school's self-evaluation is only partly accurate. Governance is satisfactory and governors have worked successfully with staff to manage the school's expansion. Communications with parents have improved. A few still feel that their concerns are not fully taken into account, but most are very appreciative of the school's work. The school works well with the community and outside agencies for the benefit of pupils. It has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and science to match those in reading and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teachers' planning to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged, particularly the more able.
- Develop the role of middle managers in monitoring provision and standards in all areas of the school's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards and achievement are satisfactory. Children start the Reception Year with standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. Their progress is good in mathematical development and satisfactory overall. They continue to make satisfactory progress through the school. Results in Year 2 national tests are broadly average, but fewer than average reach the higher levels.

Progress in Years 3 to 6 has been significantly below average for the last three years. It has improved this year and is satisfactory, in part because booster classes have been used effectively to raise standards in English and mathematics in Year 6. This year's provisional test results show above average numbers achieving the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. The numbers achieving the higher level are above average in reading in response to high expectations for independent reading in school and at home. In contrast, no pupil reached the higher level in writing and the school has identified this as a priority for improvement. The match of work to ability is generally accurate in mathematics and the numbers reaching the higher level are average. The number achieving the higher level in science is below average because pupils are not consistently challenged in this subject through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The good quality of pupils' spiritual and moral development reflects well on the school's religious character. Their behaviour is good in lessons and at play and outstanding in collective worship, where they sing hymns with enthusiasm and join reverently in prayers. Their understanding of other cultures has improved and is now satisfactory. They have good attitudes to learning and mostly enjoy school. Social development is good and pupils cooperate well with others. Their preparation for working life is satisfactory. They have sound basic skills, but not all take enough care with their handwriting and presentation or in checking work for accuracy.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and play together energetically and responsibly. They willingly take on duties around the school, though the range and challenge of the responsibilities on offer are limited. The school has worked effectively to improve attendance, which is now above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in all years, including Reception, and there are good features. Lessons are clearly focused and well managed. Teachers have high expectations for attentiveness and use resources well to illustrate key points. The partnership between teachers and assistants is a strength, notably in helping pupils with learning difficulties. Discussions are of good quality, particularly when pupils talk over their answers beforehand with a partner.

Teachers successfully plan appropriate work for pupils of average ability or below, but more able pupils are not consistently challenged from Reception onwards. Too often these pupils complete the same work as others and do not have time to tackle the more difficult tasks planned for early finishers. These shortcomings sometimes reduce the impact of the good

features of teaching and mean that more able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable, notably in science and writing. Expectations for the quality of presentation and accuracy of written work are not always high enough. There has been improvement in marking following recent training, though pupils need more time to improve their work after marking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Learning is extended well through a stimulating range of special events, visits and visitors, including those from the church and local community. There is a wide range of after-school clubs, with particular strengths in music and sport. These provide valuable opportunities for gifted and talented pupils, and the school is seeking to identify more pupils who would benefit from the chance to join these activities.

There have been well judged improvements in provision for outdoor play in Reception, and for information and communication technology across the school. Planning for all years is soundly based on official guidelines. The inclusion of modern foreign languages is a valuable feature that widens pupils' understanding of other cultures. The targets for pupils with learning difficulties are clearly focused. Structured language programmes focus closely on improving the literacy standards of younger pupils, though they have been introduced too recently for their effect to be measured. Opportunities for pupils to write at length are not coordinated well enough across different subjects. Rapid changes of topic and the sometimes undemanding worksheets limit pupils' experience of planning, drafting and improving their writing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The positive relationships between adults and pupils are a considerable strength. Procedures for protecting and safeguarding pupils meet requirements and are well understood. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is regularly monitored, with the result that their targets closely match their needs. Systems for assessing and recording pupils' academic progress are satisfactory and the information gathered is accurate. The school has begun to assess progress in writing more frequently and now has earlier notice of where improvement is needed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher give a strong lead in their commitment to the school's Christian ethos and this is reflected well in pupils' personal development. The school is calm and orderly with a good working atmosphere. New pupils and staff are well supported. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive and meets all its statutory duties.

The new management structure is beginning to have a positive impact. Staff teams have drawn together a wealth of information on the quality of provision. This has resulted in recent improvements that are helping pupils to make better progress, particularly in Year 6. However, the main priorities for future development do not stand out clearly in the extensive detail of the school development plan. The roles and responsibilities of middle managers are not defined

clearly and they are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the impact of provision on pupils' development.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

04 July 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Kingsnorth Primary School, Ashford TN23 3EF

As you know, we visited your school recently to see how you are getting on. Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us. You were very friendly and polite and we enjoyed talking to you. We want to share with you what we thought about your school. Here are some of the important things we found:

- You are good readers and have worked hard to improve your mathematics.
- You behave well around the school and we were impressed with how good you are in assemblies.
- In lessons you listen carefully and work well on your own or with your talk partners.
- You enjoy school and are keen to join in all the clubs and special events put on for you.
- You get on well with the adults and they help you when you have difficulties.

Your school is satisfactory but we have asked your teachers to do these things to make it even better:

- To help you do as well in writing and science as you do in reading and mathematics.
- To plan class work that is just hard enough for all of you.
- To give teachers in charge of each subject more responsibility for checking how well you are doing and finding out what works best for you.

We think you could help yourselves in three ways:

- By making sure that your writing and diagrams are neat.
- By checking your work for mistakes before you hand it in.
- By correcting it after it has been marked.

We hope you have a good summer holiday and enjoy school when you come back in September.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Parker Lead inspector