

# Kings Meadow School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122167
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327644
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	28
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	E Last
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	Manning Road Moulton Leys Northampton NN3 7AR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 673730
<b>Fax number</b>	01604 673739

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small special school caters for pupils who have significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Many of the pupils have additional specific learning and communication difficulties. Some pupils have experienced abuse and trauma, which affects their healthy emotional development. The majority of the pupils come from White British backgrounds. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Many have experienced severe difficulties and frequent exclusions from their mainstream schools before being given a place at Kings Meadow School. There is a high turnover; pupils often join the school part way through the academic year. Although a primary school, Kings Meadow rarely receives referrals for children who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The youngest pupil on roll is currently in Year 2.

The school has secured many awards for its work, including a Healthy Schools award and an Activemark. Kings Meadow staff (Learning to Grow team) provide expertise and support to a number of families in the local authority whose children are experiencing difficulties with their behaviour in their mainstream school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding and inspirational school succeeds in creating a safe but challenging environment for its pupils. It provides high quality education and highly effective behaviour therapy and care. Pupils are nurtured and valued, their achievements are celebrated and they are enabled to communicate, control their behaviour and learn as effectively as possible. A significant strength is the group of talented, specialist staff who work at the school. Teachers, teaching assistants, play and theraplay therapist and other visiting professionals provide excellent support. As a result, pupils really enjoy their learning and achieve exceptionally well. Outstanding teaching means that pupils learn to regulate and manage their feelings and behaviour. This gives them the confidence to want to succeed in other areas of learning. They quickly develop positive attitudes to work, to the staff and to each other. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are sensitively encouraged to become as independent as possible. Consequently, they enjoy being school councillors and buddies, and willingly undertake duties around the school. The school is very bright and cheerful with high quality displays and smiling, welcoming staff. This ensures that pupils learn to take pride in their achievements, become increasingly confident and strive successfully to do their very best. Staff sensitively support any pupil who is finding it hard to conform to the school's high behavioural expectations. They instantly praise and reward fellow pupils who learn to ignore outbursts from their peers so lessons can continue uninterrupted. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They know what to eat to be healthy and enthusiastically join in the many physical activity clubs.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding across the whole school because of the excellent care and education package it offers. Although standards are low because of the extent of learners' severe difficulties, all make exceptional progress. The excellent curriculum provides a very carefully planned balance between teaching pupils key skills and giving them the strategies to manage their behaviour.

Lessons are stimulating and interesting and staff have very high expectations of their pupils. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are excellent. The school keeps excellent records of its achievements and makes very good use of detailed assessment information to set very challenging individual targets for learning and behaviour.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is exceptionally clear about the direction the school should take and, together with the senior leadership team, works tirelessly to bring about improvements. The school has excellent working relationships with other local schools and agencies, which impact very positively on curriculum developments and pupils' achievement. Although parents are overwhelmingly very happy with the school's provision, the leadership team has correctly identified that there is not enough information about how they can support their child's learning at home. The leadership of the school is ambitious and highly successful and outstandingly placed to bring about further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the strong links with parents by ensuring they play a full part in supporting pupils' achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are low but pupils achieve exceptionally well, especially when taking account of their prior, often traumatic, educational experiences. The school's excellent tracking systems demonstrate clearly that pupils in all age groups make exceptional progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Excellent systems are in place to monitor carefully the progress all pupils make towards achieving their behaviour and learning targets. The school sets very challenging targets and the commitment shown by all staff and pupils to ensure they are reached, and often exceeded, is a winning combination that lies at the heart of the school's success.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' attitudes in lessons and their behaviour around the school are excellent. They respond very well to the highly effective systems to promote good behaviour and celebrate effort. They say they feel safe and love coming to school because they like the staff so much and enjoy all the interesting activities. Consequently, their attendance is excellent and exclusions are very rare. Pupils say that they have difficulties and are aware that their school is 'for children who are not getting it right', but feel they are helped to get back on track by the staff. They enjoy being on the school council and often suggest ways to raise money for charities such as Boxes for Africa. Pupils participate enthusiastically in activities such as dance, gymnastics, archery, karate, football and swimming provided by the school. All pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Excellent teamwork and relationships are seen in all classes. The highly experienced and competent staff skilfully use a wide range of approaches to engage all pupils. Consequently, pupils make substantial gains in their learning and personal development, and also in their independence and social skills. Staff have considerable expertise and totally understand their pupils' particular needs. Robust and consistent structures and routines result in highly successful approaches to managing pupils' extreme behaviours. Work set is based on highly accurate assessment and presented at just the right level for individual pupils. As one member of staff commented, 'If we didn't get the match of work just right, the pupils would soon let us know through inappropriate behaviour.' Lessons are very well planned and organised to make the best use of the time available.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is highly successful because it promotes both excellent achievement and enjoyment. The balance between teaching important skills such as reading and writing and promoting pupils' personal, social, behavioural and independent skills is just right. The school has developed and produced its own Primary Curriculum for Behaviour, which is shared with other local schools, many of whom visit the school to see staff's skilful behaviour management in action. Pupils are highly motivated by the excellent variety of enrichment activities, such as

Year 6 pupils' recent residential week in Nantwich. Pupils said that they enjoyed this experience very much and it was clearly highly effective in developing their social skills. Events such as diversity weeks, Black History month and theatre visits enrich the curriculum and bring pupils' learning to life.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

High staffing levels ensure that pupils are well supervised at all times and this means that staff and pupils are kept safe. Rigorous procedures minimise risks to pupils, for example when going out on visits. Detailed individual learning and behaviour plans are drawn up and routinely monitored by the staff. Staff are exceptionally well trained to meet their responsibilities. All child protection and safe recruitment procedures are securely in place. There are excellent assessment systems to track pupils' progress. Older pupils are becoming increasingly involved in evaluating their own learning. Teachers' marking is very good and clearly tells pupils how to improve their work. The school works closely with parents and keeps in touch via home/school diaries but more work is required to involve all parents in supporting pupils' learning. They get limited information about how to help their children to achieve their individual targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher's leadership is inspirational and innovative. She works very closely with the leadership team to form an impressive partnership so that their distinct areas of expertise combine seamlessly to make the school outstanding. There is a tremendous team spirit in school and all staff are committed and succeed in providing the best for all pupils. The school's contribution to community cohesion is excellent, as manifest in its sterling work with other local schools to share behaviour management expertise. Governors are great supporters of the school and play an increasingly effective role in questioning, challenging and monitoring the school's performance. All parents are extremely happy with the school. One, summing up the views of many, wrote, ' I cannot praise this school highly enough. It has turned my child into a boy who now loves school, whereas before he was school phobic.'

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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kings Meadow School, Northampton, NN3 7AR.

I enjoyed visiting your school very much. It was good to talk to the school council and see all the great things you do. I agree with all your parents that you go to an excellent school. These are the things I liked best:

- your behaviour is excellent and you are keen and eager to learn new things
- you are all doing well in lessons, and in learning to control your behaviour
- you enjoy the school meals and eating healthily, and you are brilliant at helping the adults to run the school
- teachers and teaching assistants make learning exceptionally interesting and enjoyable for you
- you make excellent progress in literacy and numeracy and enjoy all the sports and visits
- anyone who needs help with work or improving behaviour is always given it
- the teachers and staff take excellent care of you while you are in school
- your headteacher is an outstanding leader.

The headteacher, staff and governors have lots of good ideas to make the school even better. I agree with their ideas. I also think it would be good if staff help your mums and dads and carers to help you to learn at home as well as at school. You can help your teachers by continuing to behave well and work hard, and by always being kind to each other.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox Lead inspector