

# Kitwell Primary School and Nursery Class

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103339
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	367357
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Raymond Lau

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	226
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Neale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vanessa Payne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Wychbury Road Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 4DL
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by 10 teachers. They also met with parents and carers, groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school development plan, assessment data, monitoring and evaluation records, newsletters, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and safeguarding policies. They reviewed teachers' planning and sampled pupils' work. Inspectors also analysed the responses to 120 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

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

- What is the current achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6, especially in mathematics and English?
- How well do pupils, particularly boys, improve and apply their writing skills?
- To what extent does day-to-day assessment help pupils to understand what they need to improve?
- What impact have the changes in leadership and management had on raising pupils' achievement?

## Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. A large majority of pupils are from a White British background and around a fifth come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school has gained Healthy Schools status, and has achieved the Artsmark Gold, the Inclusion Quality Mark and the foundation level of the International Schools Award.

**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

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school which has a very caring environment. Staff know the pupils extremely well and are particularly effective in supporting those who have the greatest level of need. Because of this, care, guidance and support are outstanding. One parent, for example, said, 'My child has really come on in leaps and bounds through the great support of the staff.' There is very specific targeted intervention for any pupils who are falling behind especially for the younger pupils. The school's data show that, as a result of this support, many pupils in Years 1 to 4 are making rapid progress in both their academic achievement and their personal development. The school's caring approach extends to parents and carers. The extensive range of ways used to engage them is outstanding. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving rapidly and pupils really enjoy coming to school. One pupil echoed the views of many when he said, 'I am very proud to be at Kitwell!'

Through the good leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, all aspects of the school's work have been strengthened, demonstrating good capacity for further improvement. Senior leaders have a clear vision of what they would like the school to be and have shown drive and commitment to improving pupils' progress. Other leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and can demonstrate which initiatives and actions are improving the quality of pupils' learning. However, not all subject leaders have had sufficient time or resources to fulfil their roles as fully as they would like because the emphasis has been on the development of the core subjects.

Children enter the Nursery class with attainment which is below age related expectations and get off to a rapid start. By the time they leave the Reception year, their attainment is in line with national expectations which represents good progress. Because of good teaching and high expectations from the teachers, pupils learn well and make good progress in Years 1 to 4. As a result, attainment in these year groups is rising. Although improving, there is still some variation in the quality of teaching, progress, and attainment in Years 5 and 6 as the approaches in the lower part of the school have yet to become embedded. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average and they have made good progress since joining the school. Attainment in English is better than in mathematics. Girls reach higher standards than boys, although there is little difference in the rate of progress. The school has good procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress and has developed good systems for ensuring that pupils take note of the comments teachers make when marking their work. However, the quality of teachers' feedback is inconsistent and pupils' work is not always corrected as rigorously as it could be to help them improve the quality of their work even further.

The curriculum is good because it focuses well on developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology and makes a strong

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contribution to the good personal development and well-being of individual pupils. It is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities which motivate the pupils and lead to good attitudes to learning. However, in some year groups, the topic-based approach is unimaginative, relying too heavily on the use of worksheets. The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils throughout the school to develop or demonstrate their independence, initiative and creativity.

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

- Accelerate pupils' learning and progress, especially in mathematics and English by:
  - ensuring that the teaching is consistently good, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching
  - marking pupils' work more rigorously so that pupils are challenged to make further improvement to their work.
- Develop the topic-based aspects of the curriculum by:
  - planning more creatively and reducing teachers' reliance on the use of worksheets
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and develop independent learning skills.
- Provide more time and resources for subject leaders to develop their areas of responsibility more creatively.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils now achieve well. Attainment in Year 6 had fallen over the two years to 2010 and the school has made concerted efforts to arrest this decline. The school's forecasts and the sampling of work and lesson observations during the inspection all indicate that attainment has improved this year, particularly in Years 1 to 4, and is currently broadly average at the end of Year 6. Attainment in reading is better than in writing. Attainment in mathematics is lower than in English, although this picture is improving. Girls' attainment is better than that of boys although the difference in performance is beginning to close. Pupils' progress is good. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Those experiencing the greatest difficulties make particularly good progress because of the very well-targeted intervention work.

Pupils enjoy lessons in English and mathematics, particularly when there are opportunities for them to work actively in pairs and groups. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 5, pupils worked collaboratively in small groups to create and then discuss freeze-frame scenarios, and then applied their learning individually to their writing. Both boys and girls enjoyed this approach and they demonstrated good attitudes to learning. Pupils behave well and are polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors. They have an outstanding understanding of what constitutes safe practices, particularly when using the internet. Pupils said that they feel extremely safe in school and responses to the questionnaire for parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive with regard to safety. Pupils demonstrate good healthy practices through their food choices at lunchtime and their enthusiastic uptake of a wide variety of sporting opportunities. For example, pupils in

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Year 2 particularly enjoyed a gymnastics lesson taught by an external specialist coach. The pupils showed a high level of enthusiasm and participated very well within the lesson.

The pupils contribute positively to the school and wider community, for example through undertaking responsibilities within the classroom or involvement with the school council. They raise money for charities. For example, pupils are hosting a charity concert to raise money for a new roof for a school in The Gambia. They have been active in recycling in the 'rag bag' scheme. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The high-quality assemblies enable pupils to reflect on spiritual and moral issues. They show good manners towards each other and adults. They have clear opinions on how to live in society and demonstrate good cultural awareness, taking part in visits, arts and sports activities, and participating in themed weeks, such as 'Caribbean Week'. Pupils demonstrate some good personal attributes, such as teamwork. However, their skills of independence and initiative are not as well developed. Their literacy and numeracy skills are improving and they have good information and communication technology skills, shown through their effective use of multimedia and digital applications.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers plan their lessons well. They provide clear success criteria which help pupils to understand what good-quality work should look like. The activities are well structured and help pupils to develop good collaborative skills as they work in pairs and small groups.

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Teachers generally have high expectations of the pupils. Occasionally, however, the work lacks challenge for some pupils and, in some classes, there is an over-reliance of the use of worksheets. Teachers have strong relationships with pupils and know the pupils very well. Staff use skilful questioning to check and develop pupils' understanding. The pace of the lessons is brisk, enabling pupils to learn through small chunks of activities while sustaining their levels of interest. Support staff are deployed well within lessons and actively encourage pupils with their learning. Sometimes, adults give pupils too much help and pupils come to rely on them too much, which limits their ability to develop independent learning skills. The quality of assessment is good. Teachers provide good oral feedback. They mark the pupils' work regularly, asking specific questions to which pupils have to respond and ensuring pupils make corrections where they have made mistakes. However, teachers' marking varies too much and sometimes lacks sufficient challenge to help the pupils to improve their work to the next level.

A revised curriculum has provided greater opportunity for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through themes, different subjects and topical events. These initiatives are improving pupils' attainment and stimulating both boys and girls to develop their writing skills for a purpose. For example, pupils in Year 4 wrote poems about the recent royal wedding. Along with much of their work, these were valued highly by being proudly displayed on the classroom walls. The curriculum in Year 6 has focused too much on preparation for tests and this has restricted the breadth and depth of the topics studied and allowed too much emphasis on worksheets; the school is aware of the need to review the curriculum in this class. Specialist teachers and coaches, who visit the school to teach music and sport, broaden the pupils' knowledge and skills. Participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports and cooking, is high. The arts, including musical performances and drama productions, play an invaluable part in the school's life. During the inspection, for example, the highly impressive school choir involving 50 pupils rehearsed a range of songs confidently in preparation for their charity concert.

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support ensure pupils receive very well-targeted support, especially pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. One parent commented, 'The staff are excellent in supporting the children with special needs. My child has really improved her behaviour and gained a lot of confidence.' The work of the inclusion manager and dedicated support staff ensure a highly coordinated approach that addresses the needs of individual pupils and helps them to succeed. Intervention programmes, such as 'Every Child a Reader', have improved attainment in Key Stage 1. Transition arrangements between the Nursery and Reception classes and from Year 6 to the secondary school are highly effective. An extensive range of external agencies complement the school's work. The school has taken extensive steps to reach out to pupils' families which has significantly reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has raised staff's expectations and provided a strong drive to raise pupils' attainment. The morale of staff is high. Sustained improvements in teaching and learning are clearly evident and the overwhelming majority of teaching is good. The monitoring of teaching and learning and the systems for tracking pupils' progress are robust and rigorous. Each teacher is held to account for the progress of individuals and groups of pupils within his or her class. As a result of concerted efforts to close the gaps in the performance of different groups of learners, equality of opportunity is good. Through its strong pastoral care programme, the school ensures that there is no racial discrimination. Subject leaders for English, mathematics and information and communication technology have monitored provision in their subject areas well but some other subject leaders have had insufficient time to exercise their roles fully. The governing body challenges and holds the school's leaders to account for their actions, decisions and performance. Individual governors take on specific areas of responsibility and monitor the progress made.

The school's work with parents and carers is outstanding. Extensive action has been taken to improve communications, and raise parents' and carers' levels of involvement with their children's learning. For example, when adverse weather conditions prevented the school being open, suitable work was set and communicated to parents and carers through the school's website. The high-quality termly 'Kitwell Chronicle' enables parents and carers to join the staff in celebrating pupils' work and achievements. Parents' evenings are extremely well attended. A recent father's day event attracted 79 fathers. There is a good range of partnerships with other agencies and organisations. This school is part of the local extended services cluster that provided funding for a weekly breakfast club for parents and carers. Through this club, a number of parents and carers requested a course in sign language and have subsequently gained a certificate in the use of sign language. A good range of partnerships, such as that with a professional football club, enhances curricular provision. Safeguarding procedures are secure and robust. There is particularly good provision for first aid; risk assessments are of high quality and well-implemented policies maintain the welfare of the pupils. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has a good understanding of the socio-economic, faith and religious factors affecting the local community and has established strong links with various organisations and places of worship. The links with a school in The Gambia are strengthening, although links with contrasting schools in different settings in the United Kingdom have yet to be developed.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and improving. Children's attainment has improved over the last three years, particularly in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. The staff plan a wide range of activities and children have opportunities to explore, play and develop their skills. Children behave well and demonstrate good manners to each other and adults. They have a good understanding of safe practices, for example, using knives and forks safely when eating food at lunchtime.

Good-quality teaching enables children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Teachers deliver a good range of supplementary activities to support learning through an effective balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Assessment procedures are good. The broad curriculum is enhanced by exciting activities. During the inspection, children went to 'Bluebell Wood' to study insects and nature, and develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. The subsequent activities in the Reception class enabled children to produce a book of their achievements, demonstrating sound writing skills for their age. Aspects of writing are taught well that will raise achievement in the future. Excellent relationships between adults and children, and outstanding care, guidance and support, help children to feel secure and motivate them to learn. All staff ensure that children's welfare and needs are well met.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has successfully encouraged very strong teamwork among the staff in this area. An accurate self-evaluation identifies actions which are helping to bring further improvements to teaching. The school has a very attractive outdoor learning environment. However, there is limited free-flow access to this provision for children in the Reception class.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The return of the questionnaires was above the national average, with over half of parents and carers making returns. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are extremely happy with all aspects of school and share very similar views to those of the inspectors. Inspectors made the school aware of a very small number of specific concerns, none of which affected the inspection team's overall judgements.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kitwell Primary School and Nursery Class 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	77	27	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	78	25	21	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	86	72	31	26	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	68	34	28	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	88	73	31	26	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	77	64	42	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	58	48	40	1	1	1	1
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)	67	56	47	39	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	63	36	30	6	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	62	43	36	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	48	56	47	3	3	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	73	61	44	37	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	78	25	21	0	0	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 and 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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Kitwell Primary School and Nursery Class, Birmingham, B32 4DL**

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed coming to the school and seeing happy, very polite and well-behaved children. You go to a good school. The teachers provide good teaching and care for you exceptionally well. You make good progress in English and mathematics and leave the school with standards in these subjects which are similar to those in other schools.

You enjoy lessons, especially when teachers plan and create opportunities for you to work actively in pairs and groups because you love to be involved in your learning. We particularly enjoyed seeing the high quality of your art and written work displayed in the school. We also enjoyed listening to your excellent choir rehearsing for a charity concert. You appreciate the opportunities to take part in sport, including gymnastics.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to make the curriculum even more exciting and creative. This is so that you can become more independent and be more active in your learning and in contributing to the school. We have also asked all staff to challenge you more in lessons and when you respond to their feedback in your books so that you can reach higher standards in your work.

Your school is improving every year because your headteacher and other leaders are good at finding out what needs to be improved. With your help and support they can make Kitwell an even better place. I am sure you will work hard, do your best and achieve well.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Lau

Lead inspector

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