

# Birkby Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107626
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	356198
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Straw

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>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	296
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Keith Anglesey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Davis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mead Street Fartown, Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD1 6HE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by 11 teachers. They held meetings with groups of parents and carers, pupils and staff and spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, safeguarding policies and procedures, teachers' lesson plans, assessment and progress tracking evidence and the work in pupils' books. Eighty-four questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised as well as 25 from staff and 91 from pupils.

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

- The progress and achievement of pupils in mathematics.
- Whether the school records show if the school's expectation that attainment is rising is well-founded.
- The extent to which pupils have the basic skills and personal qualities to make the most of the next stage of their education.
- The school's progress since the previous inspection and its capacity for sustained improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is a much larger than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Over 90% of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups and over 80% of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. More pupils than average join or leave the school at other than the usual times for admissions. The school runs its own breakfast club. The school has gained a number of awards in recognition of its work including achieving Healthy School status, the Activemark and Artsmark Gold.

**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

Birkby is a good school in which all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils feel exceptionally safe, their commitment to keeping a healthy lifestyle is excellent, they make an outstanding contribution to their local and wider communities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. A striking feature is the pride that pupils take in being members of a multicultural school in which 22 different languages are spoken. One pupil remarked 'we can learn about many different cultures just by being here.'

The curriculum is stimulating and effectively tailored to meet pupils' needs. The environment is welcoming, beautifully-maintained and the walls are decorated with original and creative art work. The school takes excellent care of pupils and makes very effective use of partnerships to promote their well-being. Every child is known and valued as an individual. The great majority of parents and carers are highly delighted with all that the school offers and speak of their complete confidence and trust in the headteacher and staff. Speaking for many, one parent wrote, 'The school has given my child many different opportunities and experiences. She is safe and secure at all times.'

From a low starting point on entry to the school, pupils make good progress to reach average levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing is slower and attainment is just below average. Opportunities to write at greater length are not consistent across all classes and some opportunities are missed to include literary objectives in a range of subjects. Teaching is good. In most lessons, pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is partly because of the pupils' excellent attitudes to learning and partly because teachers plan interesting and enjoyable lessons in which pupils are fully engaged. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. Some is excellent and some is less helpful to pupils because not enough advice is regularly given on how they can improve their work.

Outstanding leadership of the headteacher and senior leadership team is key to the school's success. Self-evaluation at senior leadership level is accurate and enables the school to determine effectively priorities for development. A strong sense of purpose drives things forward with middle leaders and managers, many of whom are new in post, beginning to take a more active role in evaluating the school and implementing improvements. The governing body is highly-committed, actively involved in all aspects of management and planning and holds the school firmly to account. These strengths in leadership and management demonstrate good, sustainable capacity to move the school on further.

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

- Raise attainment in writing by:
  - giving all classes the same opportunities to produce extended writing
  - ensuring literacy objectives are embedded across all subjects within the curriculum.
- Improve the effectiveness of teachers' marking by:
  - ensuring more widespread use of the best practice seen in school
  - providing pupils with advice on how to improve their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

All groups of pupils make good progress. The pupils who are in the school for the four full years make very good progress, so that from a well below average starting point, they reach average levels of attainment. Pupils in the school for the whole of Year 6 also reach average levels of attainment. The pupils who arrive at the school with little or no English make good progress during the time they attend. There is considerable mobility, for example, since last September, 31 new families have joined the school and 18 of these are new to learning English. The school ensures that all these different groups of pupils settle quickly and learn effectively. All pupils, from whatever starting point or background, enjoy their education and achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

In lessons, pupils are attentive, keen to learn and their good behaviour makes a strong contribution to the progress they make. They work very well together in pairs and in groups, supporting and encouraging each other. Pupils persevere when faced with challenging questions and do not give up when they find a subject hard. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils were searching for suitable alliteration to make their headlines for a newspaper article eye-catching and there was laughter as well as learning. Classroom routines are well-established so that pupils respond very positively to the high expectations of their teachers.

Relationships are excellent. There is a very strong sense of community and harmony. Pupils enjoy sharing and celebrating each other's success. The very large majority of pupils have strong beliefs in a wide range of faiths. These beliefs shape and influence their lives. They show great respect to those whose beliefs and values differ from their own. Pupils reflect on their experiences and consider what they can do to improve the lives of others. They show a high level of maturity in talking about the way conflicts should be resolved. They recognise that their behaviour and actions not only have implications for themselves but also for others. For example, a Year 6 pupil said 'We know bullying is serious. We just get on. Why would we want to upset anyone? All we want is to be respected'. The social skills of pupils are very well developed. Pupils take part in many local events within the community, for example, working for four months with different artists, many parents, carers and pupils made lanterns for a candlelit 'community pride' procession. Pupils show their commitment to sustainability and healthy living by taking part in the community 'make it, grow it, eat it' project. At work and at play they show high levels of friendship, respect and cooperation. However, their average academic skills and average attendance mean that preparation for the next stage of education is satisfactory.

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*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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</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>1</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 know their pupils well and relationships are good. They have good subject knowledge and make learning enjoyable. Teachers plan lessons which stimulate and interest so that pupils are keen to learn and make good progress. Teachers use questions effectively to challenge, to consolidate and to gauge pupils' understanding. Teaching and bilingual assistants are well-prepared and skilled in ensuring that different pupils make good progress. Marking is usually constructive and helpful but this is inconsistent across all classes because not all teachers give enough advice on how pupils can improve their work and reach the next level.

The curriculum is rich and vibrant and particularly well enhanced by the arts. There is a strong emphasis on promoting core skills including speaking and listening. Parents, carers and pupils are often consulted at the planning stage of topic work and so are encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry. An excellent range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' experiences. There are some exciting projects such as the 'crime scene investigation' when pupils turn into detectives to find out how science helps to solve crimes. The curriculum is carefully adapted to make sure that all pupils, of whatever background and ability, have the same chance to make good progress. However, sometimes opportunities to extend writing skills in all subjects are missed. Pupils benefit

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from the many extra-curricular activities and the very large majority of pupils attend at least one club after school or at lunchtime.

Outstanding care for vulnerable pupils is a hallmark of this school. Pupils who are new to English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are nurtured and supported so that they thrive. The breakfast club provides a high quality home-from-home environment with excellent role modelling and promotion of social skills and healthy living. Well-targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils is provided by skilled teaching assistants and other adults. Transition arrangements into school in Year 3 and on to high school are exemplary. Safeguarding arrangements result in pupils' excellent sense of safety and well-being. An excellent range of partnerships supports pupils and their families. Very effective systems monitor and encourage attendance, good behaviour and lead to pupils' highly-positive attitudes to school and learning.

*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 headteacher and senior leadership team set high expectations for themselves and everyone in school. Rigorous monitoring results in identification of areas for improvement and leaders take prompt action. Senior leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Some middle leaders are new in post and at present their impact on school monitoring is limited. High-quality training and professional development have ensured more consistent classroom practice and so accelerated pupils' progress. The school prides itself on treating all pupils equally and providing outstanding equality of opportunity for all the different groups of children represented in the school. Challenging targets are set for all pupils and regular checks on progress ensure that staff know where action is needed to support pupils in danger of falling behind or underachieving.

The school has fostered an excellent relationship with parents and carers by providing high-quality courses for many of them, targeted interventions for vulnerable families and numerous invitations to visit school and enjoy assemblies, celebrations and special curriculum events. Partnerships with other agencies and school are equally productive in enhancing the achievement of many pupils and overcoming barriers to learning and health.

There is a well-established and systematic approach to all that the school does to keep children safe. Exceptionally rigorous vetting procedures are in place and very regular training is provided for all staff. Risk assessments are exemplary and are often informed

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by parent and pupil views. There is exceptionally high-quality site maintenance and cleanliness.

The school has a long standing commitment to community cohesion and for some years has played a leading role in the local community by organising many events in which pupils, parents, carers and local people can take part, for example, this year they are running a community health project organising sessions in swimming, walking, cycling and healthy cooking for pupils, families and local residents. The school has extensive links with other school in the United Kingdom and abroad.

*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>1</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The very great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were highly appreciative of the school. There was particular praise for the headteacher, the staff, the many after-school activities and the way in which the school is good at welcoming pupils who may only stay for a while. The inspection team endorses these positive views. The only criticism, made by a very small minority of parents, concerned homework. This was shared with the school.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Birkby Junior School 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 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	51	41	49	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	63	30	36	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	46	43	51	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	40	45	54	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	48	41	49	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	44	44	52	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	44	44	52	3	4	0	0
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)	34	40	38	45	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	45	39	46	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	42	41	49	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	40	45	54	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	51	37	44	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	50	39	46	2	2	0	0

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 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 2009/10 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.**



14 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Birkby Junior School, Huddersfield, HD1 6HE**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was a pleasure to see you in class, in assemblies and in the playground and to talk to you about your work and interests. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Yours is a good school where you make good progress and achieve well. Your awareness of healthy living, contribution to your local community and understanding of people's lives in other parts of the world is excellent. You told us that you feel totally safe and we saw how all the adults in school look after you exceptionally well. You are becoming thoughtful, considerate young people. Your parents and carers agree.

You make good progress because you behave well and the teachers give you interesting things to do so that you try your best. We enjoyed looking at the lovely displays of work, especially the 'trees' telling us about your ideas and ambitions for the future. We were impressed by how well you all get on with each other and your pride in being a multicultural school. You have a window on the world at Birkby.

We found that the teachers and governors know what needs to be done to improve the school even more and have good plans in place to make this happen. We have suggested two ways that will help. First, we want the teachers to make sure you do even better in your writing by finding more opportunities for you to practise and develop your writing skills in other subjects. Second, we have asked that when teachers mark your work they give you advice on how to improve and reach the next level. You can help by attending every day and continuing to be interested in all that you do in school. We wish you all success in the future

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw

Lead inspector

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