

Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121504
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359026
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rick Welsby
Headteacher	Mrs Victoria Farby
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in seven lessons and observed six class teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils, analysed 42 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at development plans, pupils' progress and attainment data, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school policies and procedures, scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of teaching and learning and its effectiveness in accelerating pupils' progress and raising achievement, particularly for groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The extent to which senior and middle leaders are demonstrating the capacity to sustain a consistent pattern in the school of faster progress and rising achievement and attainment.

Information about the school

Kirby Hill is a smaller-than-average school serving the villages of Langthorpe and Kirby Hill, surrounding hamlets and farms and the outskirts of Boroughbridge. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage with very few who speak English as an additional language. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A lower-than-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, with very few having a statement of special educational needs. The school has gained the Fairtrade status and the International School and Global Dimension awards. The school extends its services by providing a breakfast club and an after-school club.

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 and constantly improving school. At the heart of the school's rapid improvement has been the vision and determination of the headteacher to make learning effective. Pupils are happy, confident and considerate and their enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance. Their behaviour is excellent and demonstrates the highly effective way in which they are taught to value and respect each other's differences and feelings from an early age. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about their child's experiences in school. Two parental comments summed up the views of many: 'The school treats my child as an individual and builds on her strengths' and 'All the time my child has been at school, I have never felt alone or let down by the headteacher or staff'.

In the most recent national tests, pupils' attainment and the progress they made through Key Stage 2 were significantly above the national average. This represents a considerable reversal of the position in 2008, when progress was significantly below the national average and attainment was average. Inspection evidence shows that currently, from broadly average starting points, pupils are on course to reach above-average attainment by the end of Year 6.

Although this represents good progress and achievement overall, the pattern across the school though improving remains uneven. For example, progress is much faster in Years 4, 5 and 6, than Years 1, 2 and 3, where it is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, because their support is well targeted and effective. Pupils do best in reading and mathematics, but their writing is less good in some year groups. Positive action is improving the accuracy and quality of their descriptive and imaginative writing in these year groups, although the school recognises there is still work to be done to raise attainment further. Although more pupils are now achieving higher levels at the end of Year 2, activities in these year groups are not always matched closely enough to pupils' abilities so as to fully stretch the more able. Also, there is scope to shape learning in more imaginative and active ways in order to provide more thought-provoking activities, especially for younger pupils. Most teaching is good, with some inspiring teaching seen in Year 5 and 6. Assessment information is used well. Marking is helpful, but at times lacks detailed written guidance for improvement of a kind that presents greater challenge and helps pupils of all ages to manage their own learning more effectively.

The headteacher has successfully established a positive climate for learning. Her vision and high aspirations are shared by all staff. Self-evaluation is accurate, because the checking of progress is rigorous and reliable. The governing body is reflective and self-critical. The strong links with the church, and increasingly productive links with partner schools, enhance pupils' first-hand experiences of the diverse world around them. Another example of this was the school arranging for them to meet pupils from Chernobyl. Pupils'

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spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's concerted efforts, which have successfully reversed a legacy of underachievement, demonstrate the good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate and consistency of pupils' progress in Years 1, 2 and 3 and raise attainment further, especially in writing and for the more-able pupils, by:
 - ensuring all activities are closely matched to pupils' abilities and interests to enable their skills to be fully exploited
 - increasing the demands and challenges in pupils' learning
 - ensuring pupils' writing is more accurate, imaginative and descriptive
 - ensuring that teaching is at least consistently good in these year groups.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and build on existing good practice by:
 - ensuring that learning consistently encourages pupils to be more active and inquisitive and helps them take more responsibility for their own learning.
 - making sure that marking consistently provides pupils with clear, detailed steps for improvement and helps them to manage their learning more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are keen to learn, achieve well and enjoy their learning. When activities are inspiring, such as when the John Lennon song 'Imagine' was used to stimulate their imaginative writing or when they are asked thought-provoking questions, pupils respond exceptionally well. This type of good teaching has resulted in attainment rising and more pupils reaching higher levels. When activities occasionally lack that essential spark or opportunities are missed to allow pupils to learn independently progress is slower and more varied. Although overall progress is good and improving throughout school, it is more rapid in Years 4, 5, and 6.

The school's drive to improve writing is having a positive impact, although pupils' unrefined presentation and handwriting can sometimes spoil some inspired work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified early and activities thoughtfully matched to their individual needs. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their respect and consideration for different people's feelings, emotions and experiences. This was shown by one pupil's determination to find a quiet corner to write a Remembrance Day poem.

Behaviour is excellent, with older pupils being extremely safety conscious. Pupils confidently report that they feel safe and appreciate that staff are always on hand to listen. They understand the benefit of eating healthily and staying fit. Pupils are proud of their decision-making role in helping with improvements; for example, suggesting alternative dining arrangements to add to the strong sense of family and belonging. The Fairtrade initiative ensures that pupils have an insight into global moral and ethical issues, which helps prepare them well for later life.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice observed in Years 5 and 6. At its best, teaching generates enthusiasm and involves pupils in activities which capture and retain their interest by challenging their thinking. In those lessons when the pace is slower, approaches to learning are less engaging, providing fewer opportunities for pupils to be active and inquisitive, show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. A range of assessment approaches is used effectively and consistently to make certain progress is systematically checked and action taken if any slips are identified. All work is marked regularly and helpfully, but sometimes opportunities are missed to provide written feedback which spells out clear steps for further improvement.

The good curriculum is being systematically enriched by a broad range of creative approaches such as visits out to Skipton Castle. . More interesting ways of linking subjects together are being developed, such as asking pupils to use 'rippling writing' to describe their experiences at the castle, but this approach is not yet fully embedded. Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development with a varied programme of visits and visitors. This includes popular residential experiences with a one night stopover for younger pupils and a full week for older pupils.

Care, guidance and support are good, enabling pupils of all backgrounds to achieve success. Staff can point to real successes in helping pupils overcome difficulties, with some excellent examples of care and support for pupils. Thoughtful arrangements are in

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place to ensure younger children settle happily into Nursery and older pupils transfer successfully to secondary school. Good use is made of specialist agencies to effectively support individual pupils' personal development and well-being, for example by helping them maintain regular attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a very effective driving force in the school. Leadership gives a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, in order to accelerate progress and boost attainment. The actions taken have won the confidence of staff, parents and carers. Since the last inspection, significant improvements in achievement and attainment have been realised, although the full impact of more effective teaching and learning has yet to be seen in Years 1, 2 and 3. The governing body is very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and shares the headteacher's determination to tackle underachievement. Governors are active in the shaping of the school's strategic direction and in sharpening approaches to quality assurance monitoring. The high aspirations of senior leaders permeate the whole school. Good local community and school partnerships have added to the momentum of improvement. The recent strengthening of middle leadership is adding to the rigour and sharpness of monitoring and evaluation.

Safeguarding procedures and requirements are met with appropriate policies, practices and training to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The positive involvement of parents and carers is evident in their increasing participation in their children's learning and development. The happy, friendly atmosphere and the strong sense of belonging, ensure that all pupils are equally involved. The pattern of rising progress and attainment, including improvements in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests, confirms the successful commitment to ensure that all pupils are equally involved and able to fulfil their potential. Community cohesion is promoted well with provision improving as the impact of the Fairtrade and Global Dimension initiatives embed themselves to provide pupils with broad, stimulating experiences of other beliefs and cultures.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start in the vibrant, warm and welcoming environment. They settle happily and confidently, because of the very good care and support they receive. Their skills and experience on starting in the Nursery are broadly typical for their age, although a few do experience late language development. They make good progress with all working towards the goals expected of them for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Welfare requirements are well met, ensuring that children are safe. Positive links with parents and carers support children's learning effectively, for instance when they are asked to describe family visits to the cinema. They behave really well and display a developing sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others.

They are encouraged to think for themselves, although opportunities to explore and investigate could be exploited even more. Adults' questioning prompts their thinking well to add to their knowledge and understanding, such as when on a treasure hunt for pirates' gold. Children regularly practise the use of letters and sounds, although approaches are not always sufficiently intensive to accelerate their early reading and writing progress. Regular observations and assessments are detailed in their learning profiles, which provide a secure basis for the accurate checking of children's progress and development. The on-going improvements to provision, such as matching outdoor learning opportunities with the quality of those indoors and improving rates of progress, reflect the ambition and growing confidence of leaders and managers.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Just over one-third of all parents and carers returned the questionnaire with their views of the school. This is broadly in line with the national average level of returns. These views were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of what the school provides and parents and carers appreciate that their children are kept safe and enjoy school. The inspectors entirely endorse these views. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about the school's provision for their children's particular needs. The inspectors observed lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and carefully checked the school's progress data. They found that all pupils, regardless of starting points, background or need, make the same good progress as their classmates. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirby Hill Church of England Primary 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 121 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	71	11	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	76	9	21	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	64	13	31	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	60	13	31	3	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	67	12	29	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	55	15	36	3	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	48	21	50	0	0	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)	26	62	13	31	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	60	12	29	4	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	50	15	36	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	57	13	31	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	52	15	36	3	7	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	69	11	26	1	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).

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



18 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School, York, YO51 9DS

I want to thank you all for the very friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We really appreciated our time talking to you all.

Kirby Hill is a good and quickly improving school. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour, respect and consideration of others, your excellent attendance and the really good care which is taken of you. You clearly feel confident and happy because of the care and support you receive. You understand the benefits of eating healthily and keeping fit. The good links the staff enjoy with your parents and carers, support agencies and local schools add to the quality of your learning. Some of you told us that some your teachers make your learning lively and fun. As a result, your skills are improving quickly, especially those of older pupils. Your school is taking positive action to continue to improve and this can be seen in your rising attainment, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to look at further ways of helping you to progress at a faster rate and achieve more in Years 1, 2 and 3. We would like them to demand even more of those of you who are quick learners and make sure younger pupils' writing skills improve even faster. We would like staff to make sure they always prepare activities which especially excite and interest younger pupils more, and provide you all with detailed help to improve your work. We also feel that all of you can complete more of your work by yourselves.

You can all play your part by working as hard as you can and continuing to attend regularly. Thank you for helping with this inspection.

Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Clive Petts

Lead Inspector

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