

Kirk Fenton Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121571
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	363942
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Georgina Clayton
Headteacher	Mrs Celia Curry
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and observed seven teachers. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at learning in lessons and in pupils' books. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, school policies, safeguarding documents and details of the progress made by pupils. The responses to 65 questionnaires from parents and carers, and those from pupils and staff were scrutinised.

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

- The team considered the quality, accuracy and use of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school's actions to halt the decline in attainment following a long period of staff turbulence.
- The quality and effectiveness of the management of staffing and communication with parents and carers during a period of change.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring and impact of policies and procedures during a period of high staff turnover.

Information about the school

Kirk Fenton is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school serves a community where almost all the population is White British and no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a quarter of the national average. The school has been affected by a period of leadership and staff turbulence at all levels from 2008 to the present. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2011 and had been in post two weeks at the time of the inspection. She is the fifth in a succession of headteachers and acting headteachers in a three-year period.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Kirk Fenton is a satisfactory school. Throughout the period of turbulent leadership and high staff turnover the local authority and able deputy headteacher worked well together to ensure that attainment in English and mathematics was in line with national expectations in all year groups. Good care, guidance and support have ensured that pupils feel happy and safe in school and that their attendance is high. The leadership of the deputy headteacher, as acting headteacher, since September 2010, has provided continuity and the start of a more settled period where attainment is slowly rising again. This is demonstrated by the above-average performance currently seen in English at the end of Year 6. The induction arrangements for the new headteacher have been good and she is already working effectively with staff and governors. Parents and carers recognise and welcome this effective new start for the school.

The achievement of all groups of pupils is satisfactory overall but, while English is now demonstrating improved performance, mathematics has not developed as quickly. The quality of teaching and learning is variable because assessment is not used well enough to ensure that lesson planning effectively identifies what pupils need to learn next to enable them to make rapid progress. However, the school is aware of this and the improved moderation of pupils' work is beginning to ensure a better understanding of the progress pupils are making. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children's progress is no better than satisfactory because assessment procedures are not yet in place and so activities are not always well-matched to their learning needs.

A strength of the school in the past year has been the effective evaluation of its performance enabling appropriate policies and strategies to be introduced through a good school development plan. Although it is too early to see the significant impact of this work, improvements are evident and the morale of parents, carers and staff is rising sharply. The school has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

In recent years, the school has had to focus on maintaining staffing and the quality of teaching and learning in basic skills. Therefore, some aspects of provision, particularly community cohesion and pupils' contribution to the wider community beyond the school and the local area, have been limited. Pupils have commented that they would like to know more about national and global cultures and traditions.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:

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- focusing on the application of basic mathematical skills across the curriculum
- using accurate assessment to inform lesson planning, learning objectives for pupils and target-setting
- ensuring more able pupils are sufficiently challenged
- raising the profile of mathematics in school.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by:
 - continuing the work that has begun on assessment across both key stages and introduce effective assessment procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - reviewing and strengthening the school's marking policy
 - sharing good practice between staff to develop assessment and marking skills
 - moderating assessment outcomes across the school to ensure their accuracy
 - using assessment information effectively to monitor pupils' progress and to plan more effective lessons
 - involving pupils more in their assessment of their learning.
- Increase pupils' understanding of national and global communities by:
 - providing a range of opportunities for pupils to explore and experience different cultures and faith traditions
 - promoting engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school and its local community.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils value and enjoy school. They behave well and do not disrupt learning. They work independently when required and particularly enjoy working collaboratively with their peers. In most lessons, they listen well, are engaged in their learning and make thoughtful oral contributions. They relish practical work and opportunities to participate in actions and song that reinforce learning. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 know how well they are performing and how they can improve their work but they have limited opportunities to assess their own work.

Children start school in the Nursery with skills that are in line with age-related expectations. Despite some improvement this year in English, pupils have consistently been leaving Year 6 broadly in line with the national average in English and mathematics. This represents satisfactory achievement over time. However, in classes where pupils have experienced stable and strong teaching their progress is accelerating, particularly in English. Lesson observations and school data indicate that attainment in English in Year 6 is currently above the national average with more pupils attaining the higher levels than previously. Throughout the school attainment in English is stronger than attainment in mathematics where too few pupils attain the higher levels. The performance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and more able pupils is at least satisfactory, but is better where accurate assessment identifies their needs effectively.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. They value and participate well in opportunities for thought and reflection. Their satisfactory

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behaviour and knowledge of where they can go to get help ensures that pupils feel safe in school. The school council gives pupils a real voice and roles like play buddies and play leaders enable pupils to contribute well to their cohesive school community. Pupils are also valued members of their local community but their involvement with other communities in Britain and globally are very limited. While pupils are aware of the factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and do make some healthy choices in school they are not proactive in promoting good health. Pupils' attendance is high and prepares them well for life beyond school but their key skills are average. Therefore, overall their development of skills for their future economic well-being is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

The high turnover of teachers over a long period has made it difficult to ensure consistent teaching. However, there are some significant strengths in the quality of the relationships, and strong contributions from teaching assistants who have provided stability in classrooms. Effective use is made of well-planned resources including information and communication technology and there is an increasing emphasis on learning from experience. The majority of teachers have effective questioning skills that extend learning and understanding. The increased focus on paired pupil discussions is having a beneficial effect on speaking and listening skills. In most classes, pupils are aware of what they should be learning and achieving in the lesson. Improved assessment is beginning to

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identify learning needs and inform lesson planning. However, this is variable across the school and pupils' books show that the quality of marking is also inconsistent. As yet there has not been enough sharing of good practice in marking and assessment and no moderation of assessment to ensure accuracy.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and contributes to their satisfactory outcomes. Recent initiatives to improve the curriculum ensure that key skills, including information and communication technology, are priorities. They are further reinforced in curriculum topics and themed weeks. However, there are too few opportunities to use and enjoy mathematics across the curriculum. The curriculum makes satisfactory provision for the personal development of pupils through church links, residential experiences, visitors and local partnerships. These support sporting activities and opportunities for more-able pupils to develop their gifts and talents. After-school clubs involve links with the local community but they are at an early stage of development. Curriculum implementation is variable. It is better in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2 where staffing has been unstable.

The school provides a very welcoming environment and good quality pastoral support. Pupils know that they are cared for and that adults are there to help and support them. Support is tailored to individual needs and case studies of potentially vulnerable pupils show significant improvements in behaviour, confidence and relationships. The inclusion leader has built strong relationships with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure good quality support for these pupils. The school is an active member of the local cluster of schools, which ensures good transition arrangements to the local high school. Arrangements to secure high attendance are very effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since September 2010 the acting leadership team, well-supported by committed governors, has demonstrated its ambitious vision for the school in a good development plan. This has been informed by accurate evaluation of the school's performance. Although it is too early to see the full impact of this work, inspection evidence demonstrates accelerating progress as training to improve teaching and learning is beginning to improve the school's provision. However, while some policies have been reviewed, the school's marking policy has not been reviewed and strengthened. Secure and appropriate management strategies are in place to assist the new headteacher in bringing about her aims for the school. She recognises and values the quality of recent initiatives and the new leadership team is already a cohesive team demonstrating its ability to continue improving.

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The governing body has a good understanding of recent developments in school. It is providing effective continuity and support for the newly-developing leadership team and is effective in ensuring that all legal requirements are met. However, governors have yet to evaluate their own performance to improve their efficiency. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory because all requirements are met and pupils are safe but new monitoring procedures and recent staff training have not had sufficient time to impact on provision. Differences in the performance of different groups of pupils are being eroded as the school improves the accuracy of its assessment and lesson planning. Therefore, equality of opportunity is satisfactory. During leadership and staff changes the school has kept parents and carers well-informed. Community cohesion is satisfactory overall because, although the school is a cohesive community that works well with its local area, links with localities beyond the local area and globally are at an early stage of development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage has seen staffing and leadership changes similar to those in the main school and this has had an impact on provision and outcomes for children. Most children start the Nursery class with skills that are in line with age-related expectations and leave the Reception class in line with age-related expectations. This represents satisfactory achievement overall. Performance in mathematics and in knowledge and understanding of the world is stronger than in communication, language and literacy. Aspects of personal development, particularly children taking responsibility for their behaviour, also develop more slowly.

Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. The setting provides a welcoming environment for children and is well-resourced to encourage learning based on the questions that children ask. The planning for activities is strongly driven by children's

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interests, so they are fully engaged in their learning. For example some role play costumes were helping children to explore weddings and the use of beautiful colourful fabrics enabled pupils to think about wedding traditions in other countries. The good-quality outdoor provision further extends learning and supports physical development well. Teaching assistants provide good-quality support and help to ensure children are safe. Parents and carers have a limited involvement with the provision. However, they are positive about it and typically write, 'The Early Years Foundation Stage is stimulating and fun. Our children are happy there and are thriving.'

The setting's leader started in post two weeks before the inspection. She is aware that the assessment of children's progress has not been secure and that more work needs to be done to identify the needs of all children. However, she recognises the positive aspects of the provision and has good plans in place to build on these secure foundations. Children are well supported in their transition to Nursery and to Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was 32%, which is above the national average. Although parents and carers fully recognise recent turbulence in leadership and staffing, overall their responses were overwhelmingly positive. Most said that their children are making enough progress and that teaching is good.

A third of parents and carers wrote comments. These were almost all positive but some parents and carers would also like improved communication with the school, preferably through an up-to-date web site. Almost all comments describe inconsistent teaching due to high teacher turnover and changing leadership. However, they are not critical of the school and say that children were not aware of the issues and that they continued to enjoy school. A significant number of parents and carers are positive about recent changes and typically write, 'We are thrilled with the improvements that the school has made recently and really feel that it is a positive and good school.' Several talk about the additional help and support the school has given to families experiencing difficulties and the effective additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The views of parents and carers are reflected in the report's findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirk Fenton Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 192 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	72	17	26	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	35	54	28	43	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	32	38	58	5	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	37	28	43	11	17	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	37	34	52	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	35	31	48	6	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	46	33	51	1	2	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	40	28	43	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	42	33	51	5	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	35	35	54	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	40	29	45	4	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	26	40	24	37	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	45	32	49	3	5	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	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).

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"> ■ 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.



16 May 2011

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Kirk Fenton Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Tadcaster, LS24 9RF

I would like to thank you for making the team so welcome when we came to inspect your school. A special 'thank you' goes to the pupils who gave up some of their time to talk to us about their work and activities. You attend a satisfactory school where the headteacher and all the staff ensure that you are well cared for. We were impressed by your excellent attendance that shows how keen you are to learn and to take advantage of all the activities that the school provides for you.

You all make satisfactory progress. You work hard in school and you are beginning to understand how you can improve your own work and meet your targets. You know how to keep yourself and others safe and you usually make healthy choices in school. Through the school council and roles like play buddies and play leaders you are learning to take care of each other. You enjoy school and tell us that you particularly value your caring teachers. You also say that you would like to, 'learn more about different cultures in other countries'. One of the reasons for our visit was to see how your school could improve. We have asked your school leaders to:

- help you to improve your work in mathematics, especially those who learn quickly, by providing more opportunities for you to use number skills in other subjects like geography and science
- help teachers to improve their teaching, and the ways they assess your work and use those assessments so that you make more rapid progress
- provide you with more opportunities to learn about different communities in Britain and around the world.

You can help to improve your school by making sure that you understand what you have to do to achieve your targets.

Yours sincerely,

Carmen Markham

Lead Inspector

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