

Kippax Ash Tree Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131467
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	381347
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	Rosemary Eaton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Curtis
Headteacher	Victoria Ford
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 19 lessons involving 17 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the Brigshaw Cooperative Trust and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its records of pupils' achievement and behaviour, its plans for future improvements and samples of pupils' work particularly in English and mathematics. The 105 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were read and analysed as were those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is a little above average. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. Seven of the 16 teachers joined the school in the last two years. The school's recent awards include Artsmark Gold and Investors in Pupils. Last year, the school gained Foundation Trust status along with six other primary schools and one secondary school. Together they are known as the Brigshaw Cooperative Trust. The school has a partnership with a Leeds special school whereby a number of pupils attend Kippax Ash Tree. They remain on the roll of the special school and the provision for them and their performance were not part of this inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching is good rather than outstanding and pupils’ attainment in writing and mathematics is not as strong as that in reading.
- Pupils make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. Progress is accelerating and attainment is rising owing to improvements in teaching. Pupils read confidently and with enjoyment. They calculate efficiently but find it hard to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. When writing, pupils in Key Stage 2 often have difficulty with words that cannot be spelled by linking the sounds made by each letter.
- Teaching is good and in a few lessons it is outstanding. Teachers know pupils very well and ensure that work is matched closely to the needs of all groups. Best use is not always made of the time at the end of lessons, when pupils come together to talk about their work. Sometimes the pace of learning slows when an activity runs on for too long.
- Behaviour is good and pupils have good attitudes to learning. Pupils welcome newcomers and older pupils take on responsibilities that encourage others to behave well. A few pupils need significant support to control their behaviour but the school manages them very well. There are few recorded instances of bullying.
- Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school is moving forward on all fronts. The successful management of performance, such as the steps taken to develop teachers’ skills, is driven by leaders’ high expectations. It has resulted in improvements in teaching, achievement and rates of attendance. The school is highly inclusive and works collaboratively with a host of agencies, professionals and other schools to support its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - full use is made of the time at the end of lessons, when the class comes together for discussion, to assess and advance pupils' learning
 - a fast pace of learning is sustained throughout lessons.

- Raise attainment in writing and mathematics by:
 - embedding recently introduced approaches to improving spelling in Key Stage 2, especially that of words that are not spelled phonetically
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills, including in other subjects and real-life situations
 - developing pupils' ability to plan and structure their writing independently.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' learning is good. They enjoy lessons, particularly when these involve practical activities, and are keen to get involved. Pupils understand their own targets and are accustomed to helping to assess their own work and that of their friends. Untidy writing and carelessness sometimes spoils the quality of pupils' written work.

When they enter the Nursery class, children's skills are often below those expected for their age. They make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, the gap has narrowed between their skill levels and the national averages. Children's physical development is particularly strong owing to improvements, since the previous inspection, in the use of their outside area.

Good progress continues during Key Stages 1 and 2 and has accelerated in recent years. That is why achievement is now good. The school sets challenging targets for progress in each year group. These are generally met and sometimes exceeded. This means that pupils are making faster progress than is expected nationally. Progress is generally fastest in reading. However, Year 6 pupils explain that by looking back in their books they notice especially the progress they are now making in writing. When their particular starting points are considered, different groups of pupils make equivalent progress. For example, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Their activities are carefully tailored and teaching assistants are knowledgeable and share teachers' high expectations for all pupils.

Attainment has risen in the areas where the school has focused particular efforts. Consequently, calculation, reading, and boys' writing have all improved. Attainment in reading is a little below average at the end of Year 2 and is average at the end of Year 6. Pupils in Key Stage 1 tackle new words confidently, using their knowledge of the sounds made by letters, and build up a secure knowledge of 'tricky' words that do not conform to usual spelling rules. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 have not previously had this focused teaching of spelling. Some have not learned to cope with 'tricky' words, instead attempting unsuccessfully to spell them phonetically. Pupils' ability to use and apply their skills across the curriculum and to solve problems is the weakest element of mathematics.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are in the main happy with the quality of teaching. The inspection evidence confirms that teaching is good. Leaders have ensured that teachers' approaches are consistent from class to class. For example, planning in English and mathematics is related closely to the levels at which groups of pupils are working and the next steps they need to take. This is a key reason why different groups make equally good progress. Another factor is the good quality support provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Well-chosen resources, such as laptop computers and mathematical apparatus, help these pupils to succeed at tasks that might otherwise be daunting.

Higher-attaining pupils are stretched by additional challenges, such as the teacher asking probing questions, which required Year 3 pupils to think very hard about the advantages of using a compass when giving directions. This lesson took place outdoors as do increasing numbers of others, helping to bring learning to life and providing first-hand experiences so that, for example, pupils have plenty of ideas about which to write. Year 6 pupils' investigation of facilities in their locality gave meaning and relevance to their letters arguing that a skate park would reduce vandalism. It was a good example of how well teachers promote pupils' personal development, in this instance by encouraging them to express their views on moral and social issues. Writing is hampered when pupils have insufficient opportunities to plan and structure independently, longer pieces of writing.

Pupils are invariably gathered together towards the end of the lesson. Sometimes, these occasions are used well, for example, when teachers remind pupils what they were intended to learn and check whether or not this has been achieved. Occasionally, discussions are not sufficiently focused or are rushed, so learning is not assessed or reinforced well enough. The best teaching keeps pupils keen and learning well throughout. When pupils have finished a task and wait for a new challenge, learning inevitably slows down.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A very small minority of parents and carers express some concerns about standards of behaviour. From time to time, pupils join the school displaying particularly extreme behaviour. This can result in a dip in the behaviour of a particular class. Working in close partnership with outside agencies and parents and carers, the school ensures that these pupils usually respond very positively to its approaches to helping them to control their behaviour. Occasionally, and in order to best meet their behavioural and emotional needs, individual pupils move to alternative provision. Whilst the school is determining how best to manage pupils whose behaviour is especially challenging, lessons can be disrupted. This leads pupils to explain that behaviour is usually good, but not always. The inspection judges that behaviour is good because the school's meticulously-kept records show that for the most part disruption to lessons is uncommon. Staff respond promptly and effectively to any signs that a pupil is finding it hard to cope. Leaders, including the governing body, continuously review the school's arrangements and adapt them in the light of pupils' changing needs.

Their good relationships with each other help pupils to learn. For example, they work together sensibly in pairs and readily share their ideas. 'Buddies' and play leaders are valued and encourage others to play together and be friends. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue in school. They are confident that their concerns are taken seriously and say that staff

do their best to sort matters out. This year's 'Advice Team' of pupils, to which those that bully are asked to account, has not yet had to meet. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and parents and carers endorse this. The school makes sure that pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep safe, including when they are out of school. Attendance has been average in recent years but a concerted effort has raised it to its current above average level.

Leadership and management

A range of activities to monitor the school's work involves all senior leaders and provides them with an accurate view of the school's performance. Areas of relative weakness are identified precisely and feed into extensive plans for moving the school forward. These are effective as seen in the clear trend of improvement in all aspects of the school. For example, improvements in reading can be traced back to leaders' work to enhance the way pupils' reading is guided. Staff development opportunities are closely linked to whole-school and subject priorities, together with personal targets identified with individuals. They have led to improvements in teaching, such as the use made of assessment information to meet pupils' needs. Its track record alone provides convincing evidence of the school's good capacity to continue to improve.

Leadership skills are being developed within the staff and, for instance, a number of middle leaders are gaining qualifications. The governing body has a very good knowledge of the school's performance. It has made some key decisions relating to the school's development, for example, to become part of the Co-operative Trust. This is bringing benefits, including collaborative working to improve teaching, and rapid access to relevant professionals, such as an educational psychologist. Safeguarding policies and practice meet current requirements. Stringent checks on staff suitability are carried out. Leaders and the governing body are aware of the need to build stronger working relationships with a few parents and carers.

Outside agencies praise highly the school's efforts to promote equality of opportunity through its highly inclusive nature, for example, regarding disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. Effective action is taken to narrow gaps in the performance of different groups. One outcome of this is that boys' writing has improved. Strenuous efforts are made to tackle discrimination, for example, by ensuring that disabled pupils are involved in all aspects of the school, such as residential visits.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides rich and stimulating experiences that effectively meet pupils' wide-ranging needs and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A current priority is to increase opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematical skills, including through real-life activities, such as taking part in enterprise activities.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kippax Ash Tree Primary School, Leeds, LS25 7JL

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We have lots of happy memories of our short time with you, such as your jubilee picnic and the Year 4 performance of the national anthem. We have judged that yours is a good school. Here are some of the reasons for our decision and what we would like the school to do next.

- You make good progress, especially in reading. Progress is faster now than when the school was last inspected.
- Teaching is good at your school. Teachers make sure that work is just hard enough for all the children in each class.
- Some of you, and your parents and carers, think that behaviour could be better. We decided that behaviour is good, because pupils who find it hard to behave well are helped to improve.
- The school makes sure that you have plenty of interesting activities such as clubs and residential visits.

The school's leaders do a good job and are keen for the school to improve and be outstanding. To help them we have asked them to do two things.

- We want the teachers to make sure that you learn quickly throughout each lesson.
- We would like your writing and mathematics to improve and have suggested some ways the school can help you with these.

We did notice that some of you make careless mistakes in your books, so please make sure you check your work carefully. We send our very best wishes to each one of you.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton
Lead Inspector

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