

Linthwaite Ardron CofE (Voluntary Aided) Junior and Infant School

Church Lane, Linthwaite, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD7 5TA

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught particularly well and as a result, make a good start to their learning.
- Between Years 1 and 6, pupils make good progress from their previous starting points. By the end of Year 6, an above average proportion of pupils reach the higher levels of attainment, particularly in writing.
- Teaching is at least good, and some is outstanding. Teachers expect the best from their pupils. They plan work well to reflect the varying needs of different groups of pupils, including the most able, so that they are challenged to do well.
- Pupils behave well and are kept safe. They are very well mannered, caring and considerate. They are rightly proud to be members of their school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have created a climate for continual improvement. Recent improvements are evident in both the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and problem solving in mathematics.
- The headteacher inspires the school staff and pupils to develop all aspects of their lives through a highly motivating range of social, moral, spiritual and cultural activities.
- The governing body knows the school well and actively support and challenge the school to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in Key Stage 2 mathematics is not as strong as it is in writing or reading.
- Marking does not consistently offer pupils the opportunity to reflect on and improve their learning.
- Pupils do not always know what their next steps in learning are. This means that they cannot check their progress and achievement for themselves.
- Plans for school improvement do not always indicate precisely how leaders intend to measure improvement and the timescales for doing so are not always clear.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, including one joint observation with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors observed a number of teaching assistants working alongside pupils in lessons. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and at lunchtime, both inside the school and in the yard. They listened to a sample of pupils read from Years 1, 2, 5 and 6.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils from Key Stage 2, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher, other school leaders, members of staff and a number of parents.
- Inspectors took account of 22 staff questionnaires and 57 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent view).
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents including the school development plan and self evaluation. They reviewed the standards pupils achieved over time and those predicted for this year. They observed the school at work including safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised many aspects of the school's work including pupil's workbooks, external moderators' reports of assessment, documents relating to the performance management of teachers, special educational needs plans for pupils and the minutes of the meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Fiona Dixon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Liam Trippier

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium is much lower than the national average, though it is steadily rising. The pupil premium is additional funding allocated to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority or the children of service families.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is lower than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- Most pupils are White British. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that more is outstanding in order to raise achievement, particularly in mathematics, by making sure that:
 - when teachers mark pupils' work they make it crystal clear how pupils can improve their work and by giving them the time in order to do so
 - teachers share with pupils the next steps they must take in their learning and so that they can check how well they are doing for themselves, particularly in mathematics
 - teachers are building on the good work already underway to ensure that pupils have enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills by solving problems.
- Strengthen the good quality of leadership and management further by:
 - making sure that plans for improvement always indicate precisely how leaders intend to measure improvement and the timescales for doing so are clear.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children join the school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. The exciting range of opportunities they are given to play, explore and to use their imaginations means that nearly every child develops at a good pace and so is ready for the step up to Year 1. Children's listening and concentration skills for example, are well developed.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 2, an above average proportion of pupils reach and exceed Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement in reading for all groups of pupils is especially strong. In the 2013 national phonics screening check all groups of pupils achieved much higher than the national average. Pupils who find reading difficult say they enjoy reading at home and school and can tell you all about the books they have read.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 2. In the national assessments in 2013 at the end of Year 6, an above average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in mathematics, reading and writing; more than half of the pupils did so in the writing assessment. This shows that the most able pupils achieve well. School data and inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are on track to improve these standards even further.
- The proportion of pupils making the expected and more than expected rate of progress through Key Stage 2 in reading and writing is strong compared to the proportions that do so nationally. In writing, every pupil made the expected rate of progress and over half made more than expected.
- Progress in mathematics is not as strong, especially for boys. Leaders are now focusing on improving achievement in mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills through solving problems. However, this is yet to impact fully on ensuring pupils achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English.
- School data and inspection evidence shows that the small number of pupils supported through the pupil premium achieve well. This shows that the school uses the pupil premium to good effect and demonstrates that its efforts to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination are effective.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress from their individual starting points because they receive support that closely matches their needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- There is only good or outstanding teaching in this school, with teachers offering a wide variety of teaching and learning activities to engage pupils well in their learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and often outstanding. The balance between adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves is planned extremely carefully to ensure the rapid development of their skills, knowledge and understanding. Adults know precisely what children already know and can do and how to best offer what they need to learn next. Teachers and teaching assistants continually engage children in lively conversation, such as, when children were pretending to be Jack and the Giant from Jack and the Beanstalk. They vividly described who would find it easiest to climb the beanstalk and why.
- All teachers expect the best from their pupils and pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged, including the most able. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils were using persuasive language to argue for and against the building of a football stadium. Teachers' skilled questioning further drew out pupils' knowledge and extended their understanding of this style of writing.
- Teachers make good use of information about what pupils already know and can do and what

they have or have not grasped in lessons. This helps them to plan future work that reflect pupils' next steps in learning. However, some pupils do not know what their next steps are, especially in mathematics. They are sometimes too reliant on their teacher to tell them when they are making progress rather than being able to identify it for themselves.

- The teaching of mathematics is improving. A stronger focus is being placed on making sure pupils are given more chances to use and apply their mathematical skills in order to improve their ability to solve problems. Pupils enjoy learning in mathematics because they are given good opportunities to learn actively and they rise to the challenges of quickly recalling their number facts. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils, after chanting their timetables, practised random multiplication facts in a fast paced competitive jumping game of 'popcorn'.
- Literacy and communication skills are taught especially well across the curriculum. In a Year 3 science lesson, pupils confidently spoke and wrote using the vocabulary of magnetism. The reading of both fiction and non-fiction books is a focus during topic work.
- Pupils' work is always marked. Some comments that teachers give make it very clear to pupils what it is that they need to do to improve. However, this is not always the case. Some pupils are not given the time to look back over their work to consider teachers' advice and to respond.
- A wide variety of support sessions are well led by teaching assistants. Pupils' learning, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those supported through the pupil premium is often enhanced through their timely and skilled support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are almost always fully absorbed in their learning. Occasionally, a few find it hard to attempt work that is challenging without encouragement and adult support. This can sometimes slow their learning as seen in a lesson where a small number of pupils chose to wait until an adult came to their table rather than have a go and then check to see if it is correct.
- Pupils are very well mannered and welcoming to visitors. Lunchtime support staff say it is a pleasure to work with such polite and cheerful children.
- All pupils are extremely caring and considerate. Older pupils and younger pupils enjoy each other's company. In the playground, different age groups play together and older pupils act as play leaders for many games.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy playing imaginary games together. Some children were superheroes, others dinosaurs, fairies and magical creatures. The Christian ethos of the school is visible in the value and respect pupils freely give to each other.
- The school council gives pupils a strong voice. Pupils run a healthy tuck shop and the profits are used by the pupils to enhance the equipment available for use at lunchtimes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are aware of all forms of bullying and say that it is rare. Pupils know what to do if there is a problem and confidently say that it would be dealt with fairly and quickly. As a result, pupils feel extremely safe.
- Pupils respect their learning environment and are proud of it. When asked why they change their shoes when coming into the school one pupil replied, 'It's a clean facility'.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive to school on time.

The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated headteacher effectively leads this caring Christian school so that it continually improves. She ensures that it offers pupils a good foundation in all aspects of their learning so that they are well prepared for their future.
- As a result of training, middle leaders have strengthened their effectiveness since the last inspection, so that they now make a good contribution to checking and improving the quality of

teaching and pupils' progress within their areas of responsibility.

- The leadership of teaching is good. Leaders continually provide opportunities for teachers to improve their skills so that pupils make good progress. Recent training has improved the quality of the teaching of phonics across the school. This is helping to speed up pupils' progress in both reading and writing. Training in problem solving in mathematics is helping teachers to confidently provide a wider range of learning activities to develop pupils' mathematical skills.
- Arrangements to manage the performance of staff ensure that staff are held to account for pupils' progress. Pay awards are given where improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement are evident.
- The school has an accurate view of its performance. It knows its own strengths and what needs to be done to improve the school further. Although improvement plans are in place, they do not have clear enough measures or time scales on which to measure their success. This means that it is not always easy to check how well it is doing.
- The school's promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning is outstanding. Pupils have many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility and learn about other cultures. They are keen to support children that are less fortunate in other countries, such as Tanzania and develop an excellent appreciation of art 'that feeds the soul' through the work of their resident artist.
- The creative, topic and skills based curriculum captures pupils' interests. Homework projects often result in pupils producing extraordinarily good pieces of work, such as a model of the Taj Mahal created during the Year 3 and 4 topic on India.
- A specialist sports coach, funded from the primary school sports funding, works alongside teachers to increase their skills in delivering physical education and encourage healthy lifestyles. This helps to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including fencing. Pupils take part in many local tournaments and sporting events, such as, netball, swimming and athletics. As one pupil said, 'When you have a go it is great fun. I love being in the netball team.'
- The local authority has supported the school well expressing the view that the school is good. The school is part of the Kirklees Church School Partnership and benefits from sharing training and good practice on areas of achievement and Christian school life.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer good support and challenge, working closely with the headteacher to develop a strong Christian character and strengthen the good quality of education further. This, along with their good understanding of the school's performance from reviewing data, means that they ensure that school funds are directed where they are needed most, such as, supporting the appointment of an additional part time teacher to lead mathematics booster classes.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They make regular visits to observe learning in their adopted class. They regularly challenge teachers to show them how much progress pupils have made since their last visit and regularly seek pupils' views. Governors now make sure that rates of pay are linked to how well teachers perform. They know how the pupil premium funding and primary sports funding is spent and the impact this funding has on the achievements of pupils. Governors ensure that the school fully meets all statutory duties including those for safeguarding.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107740
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	433068

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Peter Bradshaw
Headteacher	Mrs Eelin Megson
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2011
Telephone number	01484 222573
Fax number	Not applicable
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