

Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School

Kirby Hill, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, YO51 9DS

Inspection dates	23–24 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- The leadership and teaching of writing is not effective, so pupils' outcomes in writing continue to lag behind other subjects.
- Teaching is not consistently good in all year groups and subjects.
- Teachers do not challenge the more-able pupils often enough, so too few pupils reach above-average standards.
- The governing body has an overly positive view of the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Governors have not robustly challenged leaders.

The school has the following strengths

- The provision in the early years is good. Effective leadership and teaching enable children to get off to a good start.
- Leaders make effective provision for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and disability. Consequently, these pupils do well.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of the good teaching they receive in this subject.
- Pupils are happy and confident in this caring school. They exhibit good manners and behave well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - planning and implementing an effective whole-school writing strategy so all teachers and pupils know exactly what is expected of them
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge so they are more able to plan work that challenges pupils
 - providing more frequent opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of subjects and ensuring teachers expect the very best of pupils in all of their writing
 - making sure leaders carry out more regular and robust checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' work, ensuring these checks result in rapid improvement
 - enabling those who have fallen far behind to catch up by helping them to write more accurately, and with greater stamina.

- Enable more pupils to reach higher standards in all year groups and subjects by:
 - raising leaders' and teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve
 - ensuring teachers consistently provide challenging activities for the more-able pupils
 - further improving the teaching of mathematics so pupils have more opportunities to attempt challenging problems and to develop their reasoning skills.

- Improve leadership and governance by:
 - ensuring all leaders are sharply focused on the most important priorities to secure more rapid improvement
 - increasing the involvement of middle leaders in carrying out more regular checks on the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that the best teaching practice is shared across the school
 - making sure that when teaching initiatives are introduced, all teachers fully understand what is expected of them and consistently do it
 - providing information that is more useful for governors, to enable them to more effectively monitor the impact of leaders' actions
 - ensuring governors are tenacious in challenging leaders and following up to check progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Leaders have not effectively addressed the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Standards in writing, though improved, are still not high enough; too few pupils attain above-average standards across the curriculum; the quality of teaching remains inconsistent. A small but significant minority of parents expressed concerns about leadership and various aspect of the school's work.
- Senior leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching, but these checks are not regular or robust enough. Leaders do not look deeply enough at pupils' learning to accurately assess the quality of teaching. Middle leaders do not check well enough that their actions are having the desired impact on pupils' learning and progress.
- Leaders and teachers provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers ensure pupils have access to a wide range of memorable visits and in-school activities such as the Kirby Hill Crime Scene Investigation science day. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils in all subjects.
- Leaders have put in place an effective new assessment and tracking system that enables them to identify pupils who are underachieving. However, identification of pupils who have fallen behind does not always result in pupils catching up quickly enough.
- Leaders have taken action to bolster the teaching of reading in the early years and Key Stage 1. Consequently there have been improvements in pupils' outcomes in reading. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015 was the highest for many years and above the national average.
- Effective use has been made of the pupil premium funding to support the relatively few disadvantaged pupils in the school, who consequently make good progress. Leaders also make effective provision for pupils who have special educational needs and those with disability, who also make good progress.
- Leaders make appropriate use of the government's physical education and sports funding to provide access to a range of sporting activities. Most of the pupils in Key Stage 2 have taken advantage of additional sports clubs and activities and pupils across the school have participated in inter-school events.
- Leaders have in place comprehensive planning to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils have a generally good knowledge and understanding of other religions and cultures. Teachers have been teaching pupils about the British parliamentary and electoral system and pupils know about laws and the consequences of breaking them. However, leaders have more to do to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain, such as giving pupils more opportunities to discuss current affairs, the dangers of extremism, and gender difference.
- The local authority achievement officer has identified relative weaknesses in the work of the school and has asked the right questions of leaders. However, the local authority has not provided enough challenge or checked well enough that leaders' actions are having an impact. Other external validation of the school's work has not been robust.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have an inaccurate view of the quality of teaching and have underestimated the significance of the gap that remains between standards in writing and other subjects.
 - Governors have asked challenging questions of school leaders but have too readily accepted unsatisfactory answers. Governors have not been tenacious in checking for the impact of actions.
 - The headteacher's reporting to governors is not good enough. Reports do not give information about what leaders are doing to improve standards, how improvements are being measured, and what the impact is. Governors have been accepting of this.
 - A wide range of experience and skills are represented on the governing body. Despite the limited effectiveness of the governing body, individual governors demonstrate a high level of commitment to the school, as seen in their regular visits and reporting on the work of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders recognise that they sometimes need to be even more thorough in making sure safeguarding systems are strictly adhered to, and governors need to be more rigorous in their checks on safeguarding arrangements. An action plan has recently been drawn up to ensure things are sharper.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good. The teaching of writing requires improvement because it does not enable pupils to do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 2 spend too much time doing grammar exercises and short pieces of writing that do not enable them to develop stamina and sustain quality throughout a whole piece of writing. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to develop greater writing stamina because more is expected of them.
- Sometimes the work given to pupils is not challenging enough. For example, in mathematics lessons, teachers do not often enough give pupils really tricky problems to solve. Some pupils spend too long practising methods they already know instead of being moved on to something a bit harder. In writing lessons, pupils are taught about things they should have learned much earlier in their schooling which many pupils can already do well.
- Sometimes teachers spend a long time explaining things to the class. At these times, the attention of some pupils wanders so they are not fully engaged, particularly those pupils with lower prior attainment.
- The feedback teachers give to pupils in lessons is not always effective. For example, during the inspection, one teacher gave pupils appropriate praise for the content of their writing, but did not take opportunities to explain to pupils how they could improve their spelling, handwriting and grammar, thus limiting their progress.
- Teachers sometimes make limited demands on pupils in science and the humanities subjects. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes in these subjects. For example, teachers often give pupils worksheets to complete that do not challenge pupils sufficiently or enable them to learn to present work in different ways.
- The effectiveness of marking is variable. Where teachers adhere to the school's marking policy, pupils understand their next steps and their work improves as a result.
- The teaching of early reading is good so achievement in reading is a relative strength across the school.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants effectively. Teaching assistants generally provide just the right amount of support for pupils so pupils have to think hard for themselves. Teaching assistants work on very specific targets with individuals and groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and disability, helping them to make small but important steps in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The strong values promoted by leaders and governors are evident in the pupils' good personal and social development.
- Pupils say Kirby Hill is a friendly place. This can be seen at breaktimes, when pupils play together happily and look after each other. Pupils introduce themselves to visitors and are polite. Pupils were seen taking turns to push a child using a wheelchair around the playground, making sure he was involved in their games.
- Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to children in the early years. They look after their younger friends when they are new to school, escort them into collective worship sessions and allow them to help with their responsibilities, such as holding the doors open for assembly.
- Older pupils develop a good understanding of how they can influence change because most of them sit on the many well-organised committees and councils such as the school council, collective worship and fair trade committees and the eco-warriors committee. Junior road safety officers help the whole school cross the road on the way to church.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe, including online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well in all areas of the school, including in the lunch hall where they are calm and display good manners.
- A significant minority of parents completing the parent survey expressed concerns about bullying. However, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what does and does not represent bullying and they say bullying is very rare.
- Pupils say that teachers are good at sorting things out quickly. For example, pupils explained that if they

are concerned about anything, they can put a message in the class worry box, and the teacher will take time to help.

- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Where work is well matched to the abilities of pupils, they demonstrate enthusiasm and work with concentration. Where teaching is weaker, pupils occasionally do not produce quite as much work during lessons, and their commitment to learning wanes.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- From broadly average starting points, by the time pupils leave the school attainment remains broadly average: attainment is not high enough.
- Too few pupils exceed expected progress to reach the above-average standards they should be capable of by the end of each key stage. Too few pupils in all year groups are currently working above age-related standards. The most-able pupils do not always make the progress they ought to because teachers too often do not challenge them well enough in the work and activities they provide for them.
- The progress pupils make through school is too variable, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In the 2014/2015 school year for example, progress in writing in Year 1 and Year 2 was relatively weak. Hence attainment in writing was not keeping pace with attainment in reading and mathematics, which was much stronger. Throughout the school, attainment is lower in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Too many pupils in Key Stage 2 are trailing far behind in their writing and not catching up. This is because their needs are not being effectively met during lessons.
- The relatively small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school make good progress because of the good additional support they receive. This is also the case for pupils who have special educational needs and disability.

Early years provision

is good

- The relatively new early years leader, under the guidance of the assistant headteacher, has successfully increased the proportions of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the early years to above the national average. Boys' progress in particular has improved because of the priority this has been given.
- Most children enter the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding typical for their age. A few are above this and a few below. From these starting points, most go on to meet early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. Some exceed the early learning goals. There is scope for children to be stretched further so more of them reach these higher standards.
- The early years leader and other staff successfully engage parents in their children's learning. Many parents regularly complete a record of their child's learning and activities at home. Teachers make children's learning records available to parents electronically each term, so parents can see the progress their children are making.
- Adults direct children's learning effectively. As children play and explore inside and outside, adults intervene to ask questions, encouraging children to give extended answers, thus developing their spoken language.
- Children build strong relationships with adults and with each other so they play and explore well together and follow instructions. Adults care for the children well. All the welfare requirements are met.
- Effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) enables children to get off to a good start with their reading. From an early stage, many children begin to form recognisable words in their writing as they are encouraged to apply this knowledge.
- Children manage their own behaviour well. They are able to choose resources independently and concentrate without the help of adults. In some areas, inside and out, the arrangement of resources is less purposeful, so children are less inclined to sustain interest and they are less well challenged.

School details

Unique reference number	121504
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10003571

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gillian Ward
Headteacher	Victoria Farby
Telephone number	01423 322713
Website	www.kirbyhillprimary.org.uk
Email address	admin@kirbyhill.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 March 2011

Information about this school

- Kirby Hill is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The percentage of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much smaller than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with disability or who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations of pupils' achievement set by the government.

Information about this inspection

- All classes were visited at least once, to observe teaching. A few of these visits took place with the headteacher and a few with the assistant headteacher.
- Pupils were questioned about their learning and asked what it is like to be a pupil at Kirby Hill. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised. Pupils' conduct was observed around the school.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, most members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Account was taken of 40 responses to the online parents' questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector received and analysed 15 responses to the staff questionnaire and 55 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- Documents were analysed, including the school's self-evaluation statement, school development plans, governing body minutes of meetings and information about pupils' achievement.
- Safeguarding records were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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