

Inspection of Kirkstall Valley Primary School

Argie Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS4 2QZ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Senior leaders have created an inclusive and caring ethos in this school which is exceptional. All staff focus on building pupils' oracy skills to help them become confident and self-assured. The focus on oracy is particularly evident around issues of fairness, equality and tolerance. Pupils have an excellent understanding of British values. Pupils eloquently told inspectors that 'this is a fair school' and 'we won't tolerate name-calling'. The pastoral support that pupils receive is extremely strong. Staff have supported families and pupils well during difficulties caused or made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

All parents who provided free-text responses to the Ofsted Parent View online survey were extremely positive about the school, with 100% recommending it to other parents. All parents responded that their children are safe and happy.

Pupils are happy, friendly and articulate. They behave well and are caring and courteous. At times, learning is so enthusiastic that it becomes a little noisy. Pupils enjoy learning and coming to school. School leaders work hard to encourage the small minority of pupils who do not attend every day to do so. A very close eye is kept on the needs of those pupils who do not attend school regularly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders invest a lot of time in the school day ensuring that pupils quickly learn to read. Reading is prioritised across the school, for example, through phonic lessons, school and class libraries, reading lessons, reading champions and reading assemblies. The development of listening, vocabulary and speaking skills begins in earnest in Nursery. This is built on as pupils move through Reception and key stages 1 and 2. Expectations are high. Any pupil who needs extra support is given it as and when needed. Teachers are quick to identify gaps that have occurred due to the pandemic. Phonics is systematically taught.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects in a well-resourced learning environment. The curriculum in each subject is carefully planned for. Unit maps and knowledge organisers are used to identify what pupils are going to learn and what they should already know. Teachers check during lessons to make sure pupils have a really good understanding. They do this well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), speak of how teachers help them immediately if they do not understand or have forgotten something. Teachers make good links between subjects and have sound subject knowledge. Consequently, pupils can speak confidently about what they have learned. Pupils easily recall previous work. They spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about work they had covered about Italy last year. They confidently made links between that work and the work they are currently doing on the Amazon. Using prior knowledge helps them understand about climates, continents, tectonic plates and volcanoes. Assessment processes in some

foundation subjects are in the early stages of development and need to be finalised so that they are a more useful tool to inform planning.

Staff enjoy working here and feel well supported by senior leaders. Twenty-three staff responded to the confidential Ofsted questionnaire. All responses were highly positive. Staff feel that senior leaders take action to lessen their workload. Staff say that everybody works well as a team.

Senior leaders in school have clear responsibilities. Every member of this team performs their role exceptionally well. They ensure that the emotional needs of both staff and pupils are fully taken into account. Senior leaders have a clear vision for ensuring every pupil has opportunities to develop strong, valuable and principled character traits. Curriculum planning for all pupils, including those with SEND, ensures they are prepared for the next stage of their education as knowledgeable, skilled and caring individuals.

Governors are committed to supporting this school in its improvement journey. However, some governors have not developed their roles so that they are effective in supporting school improvement. Some do not have the knowledge to carry out their role effectively or know what information they require to ensure accountability of school leaders. An external review of governance is planned to support the governors in becoming more effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding permeates every aspect of daily life at this school. All adults in school know that it is their responsibility to help keep pupils safe. School leaders ensure that safeguarding includes getting pupils to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, pupils are taught first-aid skills, how to be cautious online and how to speak out if they think something is wrong. Pupils told inspectors about software applications that they could use to report issues.

Staff are all trained and know how to record and raise concerns. Senior staff make links with external professionals for advice, support and guidance when needed. Safeguarding checks are made on staff prior to taking up appointments.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, assessment systems are quite new. Therefore, assessment in some subjects is not as effective at influencing lesson delivery as it could be. Senior leaders need to ensure that teachers check what pupils have remembered and understood in all subjects so that it can effectively inform the taught curriculum.

- Governors do not have a clear strategy to support school improvement. Some governors do not know what information they need to make senior leaders accountable. They do not all have the knowledge needed to be able to hold senior leaders to account. Leaders should ensure that governors receive the planned external review so that they have the ability to challenge school leaders and confirm that the information that they have is valuable in confirming success.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	107887
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10212275
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Bradfield
Headteacher	Philip Robertson
Website	www.kirkstallvalley.leeds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the school's previous section 5 inspection, overall effectiveness was judged to require improvement.
- The school uses one alternative provision. This provision is inspected under the registration of another school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with all members of the senior leadership team regularly throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with several members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered curriculum planning, assessment and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Both inspectors visited the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during their break times and also had over six more formal meetings with pupils.
- Both inspectors observed pupils while they were taking part in different forms of interventions.
- The behaviour and interactions between pupils were observed throughout by the inspection team.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Andy Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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