

Inspection of a good school: Kirklington Primary School

School Lane, Kirklington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 8NG

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

Outcome

Kirklington Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Kirklington Primary is a small, rural school with a distinct family feel. It is a warm and welcoming place for pupils to learn and make friends. '[The vision at this school is] helping our amazing children achieve amazing things,' said one parent. Pupils thrive because leaders have created an optimistic, kind and respectful culture. Pupils in this school are friendly, happy and safe. Staff care about the pupils and their families.

Leaders have high expectations that pupils will always be ready to learn. In response, pupils behave exceptionally well, both during lessons and around the school. Pupils contribute willingly to lessons. They engage well in discussions and collaborate with each other sensibly. Pupils particularly like working in groups with their peers.

In rare instances when bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively and pupils have faith in their teachers in doing so.

Parents and carers are very happy with what the school offers their children. They feel the school is a supportive, caring place. One parent said, 'My child loves attending and is always buzzing about the new things being learned.'

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

Leaders have put in place a broad and balanced curriculum in this school. They have designed the curriculum to ensure that learning builds on what pupils already know and can do. They have worked with other schools to check and ensure that the subject content matches the aims and ambition of the national curriculum. Leaders have developed a rich and interesting curriculum. Teachers use the forest school as much as possible to deliver the curriculum.

However, in a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not yet finalised their curriculum thinking. Curriculum leaders have not yet identified all the small steps in

learning that they want the pupils to achieve. This means that not all pupils experience and recall as much of the curriculum as they could.

Leaders prioritise phonics. Children start to learn phonics in the school's nursery. This helps children to prepare well for Reception class. Leaders have recently improved their approaches to teaching early reading. Their chosen programme systematically builds pupils' knowledge of phonics. It makes use of songs and stories to help pupils to learn to read. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know and need to practise. Pupils enjoy and look forward to their reading lessons. However, some staff are still learning how to refine their teaching of the new phonics programme. Nonetheless, because the core elements of the programme are used consistently well, pupils are quickly becoming confident readers. Pupils who need more support with reading receive extra teaching to help them keep up. This may include targeted reading support, forest school activity or reading to Isla, the school dog.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use their knowledge to help pupils learn and remember more. Teachers work together with teaching assistants to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify pupils' needs well and provide targeted support to pupils who need it.

Leaders have developed a comprehensive personal development programme. Pupils learn about relationships in an age-appropriate way. They learn to understand and respect people with different backgrounds and beliefs. They also enjoy learning about nature and the environment through the forest school.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities that leaders create for them to enjoy their time in school. Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and residential trips. Pupils in Year 6 particularly value the opportunity to meet pupils of the same age from another primary during a shared residential trip. Pupils said this will help them make friends and support their move to secondary school.

Governors hold leaders to account and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. Together, school leaders and governors ensure that they serve the local community. Leaders involve parents and carers in their child's education. They listen to their views and respond to their needs. Staff enjoy working here and are proud to be part of Kirklington Primary School. They feel valued. Leaders listen and respond to staff over matters such as workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. Their knowledge about safeguarding is refreshed through regular training, conversations and staff meetings. Leaders and staff know the signs of harm regarding pupils' welfare. They provide timely support to pupils and their families when concerns arise. Their employment checks of staff are suitably thorough. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of contexts,

including when they are online. They know they can go to an adult if they have a worry. Pupils feel safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme, which is now embedding. While this is showing signs of impact, some staff are not as confident as others in teaching phonics and delivering phonics interventions. This means that not all pupils are benefiting as much as they could in the early stages of learning to read. Leaders should continue to embed the phonics scheme and ensure that all staff are suitably trained so that all staff are reading experts in delivering every aspect of the programme.
- In a few foundation subjects, the curriculum is not yet as fully effective as it could be, as it is in development. Curriculum leaders have not yet identified all the small steps in learning in these subjects that they want the pupils to achieve. Teachers do not have all the detailed information they need to plan the next steps in learning. This means that not all pupils experience and recall as much of the curriculum as they could. Leaders should continue to develop, embed and monitor the curriculum across all foundation subjects to ensure that every subject clearly sets out the precise detail of what pupils need to know and when. This will enable teachers to purposefully check pupils' prior knowledge and accurately plan learning to build on this.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

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.

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	122653
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10240800
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Thompson
Headteacher	Tracy Burn-Smith
Website	www.kirklingtonprimary.net
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Nursery which admits three-year-olds.
- The school offers wraparound care on site. The school manages this provision.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors had meetings with subject leaders, the SEND coordinator and groups of staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about

their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans in other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils and leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, for example in personal, social and health education.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the school's safeguarding procedures, the lead inspector spoke with the headteacher, governors and the school's additional safeguarding lead. The lead inspector reviewed the school's records of safeguarding concerns and the school's single central register of staff employment checks. Inspectors also spoke with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, they spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors have also considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors have also taken into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Anne Maingay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Craig

Ofsted Inspector

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