

Kilnhurst Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106878
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	309253
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

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 on roll	
School	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Brain
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Howe
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Hooton Road Kilnhurst Mexborough South Yorkshire S64 5TA
Telephone number	01709 570590
Fax number	01709 570590

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2008
Inspection number	309253

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average size primary school serves a socio-economic area that overall is neither especially advantaged, or disadvantaged. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. A significant feature of the school is the Autistic Resource, which accommodates up to 20 pupils. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above average. The school has received the Advanced Healthy Schools Award, the Active Mark and the Investors in People Award.

The school was very significantly affected by flooding in June 2007. Staff and pupils were subsequently accommodated at several different schools in the locality. Following substantial building works, they returned to the school building in November 2007.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kilnhurst Primary is a good school. It is especially successful in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being, which is outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. Pupils acted with great maturity and resilience when they had to be accommodated in several different schools in the locality at very short notice, following the significant flooding. On returning to their newly refurbished school they expressed how much they value their school, commenting, 'It feels so good to be back at Kilnhurst!' Children in the Autism Resource and other children in school gain immensely from the opportunities they have to work together, whether it's as a buddy or in a sporting activity. The school amply fulfils its aim to, 'help children feel they are valued and respected members of the community, having courtesy and consideration for the feelings, points of view and possessions of others.' The level of care, guidance and support provided is good. Parents particularly appreciate the strong pastoral care at Kilnhurst, typically describing the school as, 'One big happy family.'

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and exciting learning activities. Overall standards, including those attained in the Autism Resource, are broadly average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. There is an emphasis on 'learning by doing', which makes learning enjoyable and meaningful. Effective partner work and good questioning help children explore their ideas and work things out for themselves. Most pupils, including those in the Autism Resource, make good progress relative to their starting points. This is because learning activities are generally well matched to the needs of different ability groups, as they work towards the challenging targets set by the school. Some marking and verbal feedback is good and provides clear guidance for improvement. However, some marking and verbal feedback is less effective. This means a few pupils are not so sure how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work further.

The school provides a good curriculum. Imaginative links are made between subjects that bring relevance and excitement to learning. In a recent science investigation, older pupils played instruments, exploring concepts such as sound waves, volume and pitch. They considered how Shakespeare could have prepared actors and musicians for a performance without the benefit of amplifiers or microphones. The curriculum generally meets the needs of the pupils well. However, the more able pupils in some classes are not always stretched and challenged enough to reach the higher levels.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision and strong leadership style, which enthuses her staff. She is well supported by her deputy and senior leadership team who share her vision and purpose. They have a good picture of the strengths and areas for development of the school and understand what needs to be done to improve further. The headteacher managed the emergency arrangements during the recent flooding with exceptional expertise. She successfully supported pupils and staff throughout the process, oversaw building works and ensured minimum impact on pupils' well-being and progress. The determination of all staff enabled the school to make a rapid recovery. Such strengths in leadership and management, alongside the good levels of achievement, the improvements in teaching and learning throughout school, and the successful development of an exciting curriculum indicate there is good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a positive start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in all areas of learning. When they join the Foundation Stage children's skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Staff develop very supportive relationships with children and their parents. This helps children settle very well and grow in confidence, as shown by how well they coped with the significant disruption caused by the recent flooding. Children are motivated to learn by a good range of stimulating learning activities. Younger children, for example, enjoyed using their imagination and exploring their ideas in the emergency services role-play areas. Older ones enjoyed many activities around a dragon theme: reading poems, writing about their 'pet dragon' and making clay and collage dragons. The Foundation Stage leader has a good understanding of the needs of the children and high expectations. Staff are working hard to provide better opportunities and activities for children to learn out of doors, so that they match the same high quality of those indoors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of some of the more able pupils.
- Improve the consistency of marking in line with the best practice in school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in national tests fluctuate from year-to-year because of the differing abilities of classes taking the national tests. A significant proportion of pupils with profound learning difficulties and/or disabilities move into the school's Autism Resource between Years 1 and 6. These pupils achieve well, because of effective care, guidance and support. However, their level of attainment can depress the overall standards reached across school. By the time pupils leave school, overall standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well from their starting points. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is similar to the national picture. The more able pupils in some classes are not stretched, however, and so do not always reach the standards they are capable of.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They behave extremely well. Children show very high levels of care and concern for others. Older children very naturally look after younger ones and help sort out any difficulties they may have. The Year 5 pupils who act as peer mentors are well trained for their responsibility and take the role very seriously. As a group of older children explained, 'We can help others by giving them options, rather than telling them what to do.' Children greatly enjoy school and managed to maintain broadly average levels of attendance, in spite of the recent disruption. Children successfully develop key life skills, such as working with others in a team and problem solving, as they carry out roles of responsibility in school and take part in special activities, such as the 'Rowdy Robot Challenge'. Pupils value the personal, social and health education lessons as well as the opportunities to get to know each other better through the 'Circle of Friends'. Pupils in the Autism Resource generally feel settled and learn to develop positive personal and social skills because staff

respond very well to their individual needs such as by providing a visual timetable so that they are clear about the plans for the day.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and help children make good progress. Classroom management is very effective and exceptionally good behaviour is a feature of almost all lessons. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement. Lessons have a clear focus and are well structured. Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and detailed planning generally matches work to the needs of the pupils well. One younger child explained how teachers help her learn, 'When your work is hard, teachers try and make it as easy as they can for us, so they do things bit by bit.' In the best lessons pupils are encouraged to consider how well they are doing and how they can improve their work further, well supported by informative marking. However, this is not so effective in other lessons, which means some pupils are less sure what they need to do to improve their achievement. Experienced teaching assistants sensitively support children who may need extra help, so they can achieve well. Staff in the Autism Resource skilfully meet the individual needs of their pupils by using a variety of strategies and approaches. Pupils in the Autism Resource are also included in classes in the mainstream when it is appropriate.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the curriculum. It is broad and mostly matches the needs of pupils well, although some of the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Useful links between subjects add interest and enjoyment and enable pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills further. Learning is brought alive by regular visits and a wide range of visitors into school, as well as special themed weeks, such as Healthy Week, Africa Week and Science Week. These activities are carefully linked to topics. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is at present hampered, because ICT equipment was destroyed in the flooding. Plans are in place to ensure that the teaching of ICT skills and the use of ICT as a resource to enrich the curriculum will shortly be as effective as it was prior to the flooding. Many pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities, ranging from cheerleading to basketball, as well as learning to speak French. Pupils in the Autism Resource have a curriculum which is well matched to their individual needs and capabilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils and their parents greatly value the high level of care and pastoral support provided by the school. Pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they have a problem. Appropriate procedures, which meet statutory requirements, are in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils and promote their safety and well-being. Pupils say that instances of bullying are very rare and promptly dealt with. Academic guidance is good and leads to good rates of progress as pupils work towards their targets. The school has developed systems to help accelerate rates of progress, especially amongst the more able pupils in writing. However, these are not used consistently throughout school. Systems to identify and support vulnerable pupils and those

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effective. The Autism Resource has highly effective procedures in place to ensure that their pupils are making good academic and social progress. The school works hard to integrate pupils in the Autism Resource as much as possible into the life of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is clearly focused on improving pupils' progress and developing a strong and exciting curriculum to support pupils' learning. Monitoring and evaluation of pupil progress, including those in the Autism resource, is thorough and used effectively to identify pupils who may need extra support. Middle leadership is not as effective as senior leadership yet, but the school is developing the role of subject leaders so that they monitor teaching and learning in each curriculum area more effectively in order to raise standards. The Autism resource is well led and managed. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and know what needs to be developed. They share the headteacher's focus on improving achievement. They ask searching questions and hold the headteacher to account for decisions made and actions taken. The school provides good value for money and has made good improvement since the last inspection.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You really enjoy taking part in many exciting activities at school. Your behaviour is excellent and you are very good at helping each other. Adults look after you very well so you feel safe and confident about asking them for help or talking to them about any worries.

Your headteacher and all the adults in school worked very hard to keep you happy and safe when you had to go to other schools after the flooding. They are very proud of how sensible you were and how well you helped each other. We know you are very pleased to be back together at Kilnhurst Primary.

Your headteacher leads the school well and all her staff give plenty of support. You are making good progress in your learning. That is because the work you do and the teaching you receive are good. I have asked your teachers to show you how to improve your work when they mark it and also to help those of you who are capable of reaching even higher standards, to do so.

You can help your teachers in their efforts to improve your school by coming to school regularly, working hard and doing your best at everything.

We wish you and your teachers well in the future.