

Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121504
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	314013
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Pickering
Headteacher	Mrs Victoria Farby
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2003
School address	Kirby Hill Boroughbridge York North Yorkshire YO51 9DS
Telephone number	01423 322713
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School is below average in size. Most pupils come from the outskirts of Boroughbridge, the villages of Langthorpe and Kirby Hill and surrounding hamlets and farms. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. Most pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly typical of the national picture. The school holds the Artsmark and a Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Kirby Hill Church of England Primary is a satisfactory school. The headteacher, senior management and governors are providing strong leadership, which is rapidly moving the school on. All staff in this small school are 'singing from the same hymn sheet' to ensure that they are absolutely clear what the key priorities for development are, including raising pupils' achievement. Pupils' progress is now tracked rigorously. Targets for pupils are realistic and challenging and are providing an effective steer for the school's work. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly. The urgent need to raise achievement is clearly identified as the 'number one priority' for the school in its accurate self-evaluation. The headteacher, staff and governors know the school well and are driving improvements forward. Current improvement is sustainable and, as a result, the school shows good capacity to improve further. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards are a little above those typically expected when children enter the Nursery and are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. Children make good gains in their learning as they move through the Nursery and Reception Years. This good rate of progress is not sustained as pupils move through Key Stages 1 and 2. While the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good and better learning, there are some inconsistencies that result in pupils' making satisfactory, rather than good, progress overall.

The school has a caring family and Christian ethos, with strong community and church links based on a Christian foundation. Pastoral care and support are therefore strong features of its work. This is recognised by parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Although procedures for assessing pupils' performance are improving rapidly, teachers do not always make clear what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils feel very well cared for, they believe the teachers to be helpful and friendly and say that the school is a safe and healthy place. As a result they enjoy their school life immensely, which helps to explain the well above average attendance. The personal development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are very polite, mature and responsible and, as a result, the school environment is calm and orderly. Almost all show considerable initiative, work very well with others, contribute significantly to the immediate and wider community and are well prepared for the future. The rich curriculum with its good range of visits and visitors offers a range of experiences that capture pupils' interest and help explain why their attitudes and behaviour are almost always excellent.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage because all adults who work with them have a very good understanding of how young children learn. As a result interesting and often exciting experiences fire their enthusiasm and ensure they learn effectively. Teamwork is a strong feature of provision. Teachers, teaching assistants and other adults work closely together to ensure that children have many opportunities to achieve well. Children are well cared for and assessment practices are thorough and underpin children's good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage. Links with parents are excellent and are strongly promoted by a variety of means. For example, targets are shared with parents as well as children to give children the best possible chances of achieving them. As a result of the consistently good teaching, stimulating environment, effective organisation and the use of a wide range of quality resources, children are happy and contented and achieve well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6.
- Ensure all pupils know how well they are performing and how they can improve their work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next S5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average when pupils start Key Stage 1 and remain above average at the end of both key stages, except in science where they are broadly average. Pupils' achievements across Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory. Targets to help pupils secure the next steps in their learning are now challenging and realistic. Pupils' progress is regularly tracked and the quality of teaching and learning is regularly monitored. As a result of the rigorous implementation of these measures, the rate of progress for pupils of all abilities is improving. Nonetheless, the inconsistencies that remain in the quality of teaching and learning mean pupils still make uneven progress as they move through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Visitors are quick to point out that Kirby Hill is a 'happy and caring school with a very friendly, welcoming atmosphere'. Relationships are excellent throughout the school. As a result, pupils steadily become mature and responsible. Pupils are extremely well behaved, welcoming to visitors and are very positive about school. They enjoy learning, developing new skills and taking part in the many learning activities and opportunities that the school provides. This helps to explain the well above average attendance. Inappropriate behaviour is very rare, but when it occurs it is dealt with effectively. School council members are proud of their involvement in making decisions, which benefit all pupils. Links with the local community are given very strong emphasis, for example, through pupils' fund-raising activities. Assemblies help promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils develop high levels of self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded, such as through the use of golden time and star of the week. Pupils understand well the importance of keeping safe and having a healthy lifestyle because these important areas are strongly promoted. Pupils develop good skills to equip them for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Secure relationships, good levels of care and effective management of pupils are features of the satisfactory teaching. Where teaching is good or better, as it is in the Foundation Stage, children find their learning experiences interesting, challenging and fun. Teaching is successful when time is used to good effect, resources are used well to facilitate learning and demanding tasks bring learning to life. For example, pupils were excited and motivated by a challenging domino investigation which was matched well to their different needs and abilities. Teaching

assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. However, the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is inconsistent. The pace of lessons is not always brisk enough and pupils sometimes have too little opportunity to develop and practice new learning, which slows progress. Teachers do not always share with pupils what they want them to learn or evaluate with pupils at the end of lessons how much they have learned, so that they can build carefully on what they have achieved. Work is not always matched to pupils' precise needs, which is particularly important in mixed age classes where the spread of ability is often very wide. Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have substantially improved and are now good. As a result any pupils underachieving are immediately identified and given extra support. Although marking is thorough and positive, it does not always help pupils to understand what they should do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is rich, diverse and provides much enjoyment through its variety. Music and art are managed successfully to make creative links between subjects, such as through art and book weeks to make learning more relevant, interesting and exciting. The many links with the local church and the wider community provide additional experiences such as visits, visitors and residential visits that widen pupils' horizons, promote sound learning and outstanding personal development. Pupils benefit from a varied range of extra-curricular activities, such as choir, sports clubs and country dancing, as well as adding to their enjoyment of learning. These rich experiences help to develop healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides high quality pastoral care for all groups of pupils. Parents speak highly of the care and support their children receive. Staff know pupils well and are alert to their individual needs. Pupils feel safe and happy in school because they have total trust in the adults and confidently turn to them for help when needed. The school works well with outside agencies to provide those who need extra help with necessary support. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety and well-being meet statutory requirements and are understood by staff. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school has implemented procedures for tracking pupils' progress so that they can be given extra support if needed. These are starting to have a positive impact on helping to raise pupils' achievement. Targets for pupils are set in all classes but approaches are not yet consistent. Pupils in some classes do not have clear knowledge and understanding of their targets and how they can help to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has accurately identified weaknesses, convincing others of their significance. She is effectively leading the introduction of the necessary actions in order to bring about improvements. As a result, leadership and management of the school are good. The school has a very accurate view of its performance, which takes good account of the views of staff, governors, parents and pupils. The rigour of this self-evaluation has been pivotal and crucial in moving the school forward. The headteacher's determination has helped establish a whole school commitment to improving the quality of education for all pupils, which is leading to improved performance. An accurate analysis of what pupils know ensures that targets to help

them improve are ambitious but realistic. The monitoring of lessons is systematic and regular. A strong sense of team spirit envelops the school and all staff are playing an increasing role in monitoring the school's work and performance. Teachers are developing well in their roles as effective subject leaders. Leadership is further enhanced by the governors who are very supportive and challenging and now play their part to the full in holding the school to account for what it achieves.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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?	3
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, I recently visited your school to find out how well you are learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to me. I very much enjoyed being in your school and listening to what you had to say. All of you tell me that you are proud of your school and give it 10 out of 10! I agree that there are many good things about your school but at present it provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. I especially like the warm and friendly atmosphere and the way all adults who work in school take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy. Your lessons are often interesting, with many visits and visitors, which help you to enjoy your school days. You attend school regularly, which helps you to build on what you learn every day. Most of you work hard for your teachers. You know about the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and eating healthy meals. You appreciate the work of your school council, who work hard to help get things done.

I know that some of your lessons are really enjoyable and enable you to build on what you already know and understand. However, to help you do better I have asked your teachers to make all lessons challenging by giving you work which enables you all to make good progress and help you achieve higher standards. I have also asked the teachers to make sure that all of you know how well you are doing with your work and what you need to do to improve it. You can help them by making sure that you know your targets and by always working hard to achieve them. This will really help you get better results. If you are not sure about them you must ask your teachers.

I was impressed by the way your headteacher and all the staff are working hard to improve things for you. You can help them by always trying hard to do your best.

Thank you for helping me so much with the inspection of your school. I hope that you will continue to work hard and help your teachers so that your school becomes a good school in the future.