

Kirklington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122653
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
Inspection number	314357
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Dorothy Bathgate HMI

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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Long
Headteacher	Mr David Ashton
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2004
School address	School Lane Kirklington Newark Nottinghamshire NG22 8NG
Telephone number	01636812360
Fax number	01636816761

Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues; achievement and standards, teaching and learning, care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and tracking documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as detailed in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Kirklington is a smaller than average size primary school. Pupils enter the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly in line with expectations. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kirklington Primary is a good school which provides its pupils with outstanding care, guidance and support. This small school has successfully created a strong, happy, family ethos where positive attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour ensure that all pupils succeed. The enthusiasm and immense enjoyment of all pupils is reflected in well above average attendance. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. One parent wrote that her son regularly greets her at the end of the day saying, 'this has been the best day of my life.' The school places the highest priority on developing pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem in a safe environment of trust and respect. Consequently, pupils are not afraid to make mistakes, have confidence to take risks in their learning and display outstanding personal development.

Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress across the school. Very small cohorts, with high inward mobility, result in significant variations in standards from year to year. However, standards overall are good. Assessment and tracking systems clearly demonstrate that all pupils make good progress, and standards in recent years show a steady trend of improvement. By the end of Year 2 in 2007, standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 in 2007, standards were well above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Standards in mathematics improved in 2007 from the previous two years where they were below average. The work of pupils currently in Year 6 and the school's accurate assessments of their performance, show that the school is set to maintain these high standards in English and science, and to continue to improve those in mathematics. However, the school recognises that standards in mathematics need to improve more rapidly to bring them in line with those of English and science.

There are many strong features of teaching and learning which are evident in all classes. The very precise, small step approach to teaching and learning, where all pupils know and understand what they are expected to learn, is a key feature in all lessons. Teachers and support staff know their pupils extremely well and tailor work appropriately with the correct balance of challenge or support. The calm and supportive manner in which teachers manage the pupils and organise their tasks is another dominant and consistent feature of teaching throughout the school. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/ or disabilities enjoy good support and consequently they achieve as well as their peers and participate fully in all lessons. Pupils benefit from a broad, creative curriculum. The high quality artwork and displays around school reflect a shared passion for art from both staff and pupils. Recent developments in curriculum planning have improved opportunities for cross-curricular working. This was evident in an outstanding Year 5 and 6 literacy session. Pupils were linking literacy work with both history and drama in extremely high quality role-play activities based on 'Carrie's War.' The curriculum is supported well by extra-curricular activities and clubs, which many children attend and enjoy.

Leadership and management are good overall. There is a clear focus on the monitoring of teaching and learning, which drives improvement. Subject leaders play a significant role in monitoring standards in their subjects, as well as analysing test results to identify further areas for improvement. The good improvement in assessment, tracking and target setting since the last inspection is contributing to higher standards and ensuring that all pupils do as well as they should. Governors are well informed and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Together with the head teacher, they demonstrate high levels of commitment and constantly strive for excellence.

The school takes exceptional care of its pupils and this underpins all of its work. Child protection procedures are fully in place. Arrangements for ensuring health, safety and welfare are robust and risk assessments are undertaken regularly. The school recognises the difficulties of a small school in relation to helping pupils develop a wide range of social skills in preparation for the next stage in their education. In order to address this issue, the school has established exemplary partnerships with a cluster of other local primary schools. A shared residential experience with some of these schools for pupils in Year 6 provides them with wider peer groups prior to moving to secondary school. The school enjoys good partnerships with other local organisations and although not a church school, enjoys strong relationships with the local parish. Outstanding relationships with parents are a significant strength of the school. Consequently, the school is able to provide exceptional care and support for pupils and their relatives in times of significant family trauma. Procedures for academic guidance are robust and marking is of a high quality. The in-depth knowledge that staff have of pupils, ensures that pupils' targets are both realistic and challenging.

As a result of the very high quality care, pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and feel very safe within its supportive environment. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy special activity days such as the 'African Village Day' which help them develop good awareness of other cultures, lifestyles, traditions and customs. Pupils and parents welcome the high priority given to promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils make very good choices in relation to a balanced diet. Many participate in a wide range of sports and games at breaks, lunch times and at after school clubs, as well as in regular physical education lessons, which includes swimming for all pupils. Pupils are well prepared for their lives as future citizens. They develop good basic skills which include information and communication technology and conversational French. Although there is no formal school council structure, systems have been developed to ensure that all pupils have a voice. They know they are listened to and that their opinions matter and consequently, pupils' feel highly valued as individuals.

The recent success in raising standards, the outstanding care, guidance and support and personal development of pupils, demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Behaviour is excellent and children work co-operatively in small groups. There is a high priority given to developing positive attitudes to learning through good personal, social and emotional provision. As a result of this, most children are working well within the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. They make particularly good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. Highly effective partnerships exist with parents, which engage them fully in their children's early development. The exemplary work of support staff in the Foundation Stage ensures that these very young children are highly motivated. They enjoy exciting, innovative and well-planned play-based activities. The temporary Foundation Stage leader is providing satisfactory leadership.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics to bring it in line with standards in English and science.

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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?	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?	1
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	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	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?	1

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

20 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirklington Primary School, Newark, NG22 8NG

It was lovely to visit your school a few weeks ago and you all made me feel so welcome. Thank you very much. I really enjoyed talking to almost all of you during my visit. I particularly enjoyed meeting the very youngest pupils who were extremely busy with a special job they were doing for 'Elmer' the elephant! I was also very impressed with the Year 5 and Year 6 children who were writing letters home in a role-play scenario as evacuees. The standard of writing was extremely high, capturing some very moving thoughts and feelings.

You all told me how much you enjoy coming to school. You told me that you think Kirklington is a good school and I agree with you. You work hard in all of your lessons and your behaviour is outstanding! Well done! Your headteacher and teachers work hard to help you in every way they can, you all work well together as one big happy family. I noticed how well the older pupils care for the younger ones, particularly at break and lunch times.

You all feel very safe in school and trust your friends and all the staff. The staff take excellent care of you and you know you can talk to them if you feel worried about anything. Many of you enjoy the after school clubs and activities and I was pleased to see so many of you take part in these. Your school provides you with a good education and you are right to be proud of Kirklington!

However, even good schools like Kirklington can make some things better. Your mathematics is not as good as your English and science and this is something that needs a bit more work. I have asked your teachers to look at this and they will be trying out some new ideas to make sure your progress is better and is as good in mathematics as it is in English and science. You can help them by telling them the ways of working that you enjoy and by being honest about what you find difficult to do in mathematics.

Thank you for such a lovely day and keep up the good work!

With best wishes for the future

Dorothy Bathgate HMI