

Kirkburton Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107745
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324643
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Ann Sharpe

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	124
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Norman Berry
Headteacher	Mr Jeff Trigg
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Hill Kirkburton Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD8 0SG

Age group	4–10
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils who attend this smaller than average size school are White British. About 10% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. They speak and understand English as well as other pupils in their classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Reception class. A greater proportion of pupils than is typical join the school at times other than Reception. The number of pupils on roll is increasing. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes because of the variable size of year groups. The school has achieved the Investor in Pupils Award, the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark Gold Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kirkburton First is a good school. It has an accurate view of its effectiveness and has made good progress since the previous inspection. Pupils thrive in the very happy, friendly and caring setting. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and love taking part in all that the school has to offer. Consequently, pupils achieve well from their starting points and reach standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 5. Good leadership and management ensure that the school meets its challenging targets. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teacher have 'taken the bull by the horns', and their proactive approach has raised aspirations for the school, so that a 'WE CAN' attitude pervades. As a result, parents are very happy with all aspects of the work of the school and its popularity in the area is growing. Capacity to improve in the future is, therefore, good.

Good teaching and learning ensure that pupils of all ages and ethnic backgrounds, including those in the EYFS and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Children get off to a successful start in Reception, where they quickly start to enjoy learning to read, write, understand mathematics and play alongside other children. Year 2 teacher assessments in reading, writing and mathematics indicate that standards are consistently above average. There has been good improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection. Although standards in writing are not as high as they are in reading, pupils' progress in the subject has started to speed up as a result of improvements in teaching and to the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4, for example, are challenged to write play scripts based on known stories. They use new words and phrases, such as 'stage directions' with confidence and understanding. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are also above those expected, because of improvements to resources and the many opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across other subjects.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Although there is a strong focus on teaching literacy and numeracy, pupils' work is thoughtfully planned and organised to ensure that they find all lessons interesting and exciting. In science in Year 3, for example, pupils are totally enthralled and absorbed by being challenged to plan a 'fair' test as part of their work on shadows. They work together extremely purposefully and sensibly, learning new skills at a rapid pace. Similarly, a recent study of water in Year 5 was skilfully planned to enable pupils to make meaningful links between subjects, such as English, geography, ICT, and art and design. Their resulting work in art and design on display is of a high standard and demonstrates pupils' ability to express their own ideas through a wide range of media. Pupils in the mixed Years 1 and 2 class make good progress because teaching and the curriculum take good account of their varying ages and starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities often have extra help, especially when they find recording their ideas difficult.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good and their behaviour is excellent. This is a caring school and pupils say that they feel safe with their friends and adults. Staff's high expectations ensure that they work and play together in harmony and follow safety rules, by always walking on the left side of corridors and not entering the ICT room without an adult. They watch out for one another, for instance, when older children spontaneously and gently pick up and comfort younger ones who have fallen in the playground and lead them safely to an adult. Pupils' outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles is seen in their regular intake of water, eating fruit at break and making healthy choices at lunchtime. Pupils play a full part in their school community, for example the school council has been instrumental in obtaining

a grant for new playground facilities and has subsequently planned for their use. Good partnerships, for instance with the Parish Council, Schools Sports Partnership and the Kirklees Music Service make pupils feel part of their local community. Their development of good basic skills prepares pupils well for their next stage of education. Although pupils know what they are going to learn in lessons, they know little about what they have to do in order to reach their individual, longer-term learning targets.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children join Reception, their skills are broadly typical for their age. Skills in reading and writing, however, are often weaker than skills in personal, social and emotional development. Children settle quickly into routines because of the welcoming and friendly atmosphere. They become confident to try out activities, talk to adults and to other children and they readily volunteer answers to questions. Children make good progress, so that most achieve nearly all the goals set for their learning by the end of Reception and some are working beyond them. They make most rapid progress in communication, language and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and number, because of good teaching and learning. Children quickly start to enjoy recognising the letters of the alphabet and grouping them together to read words. They also love counting and learning about numbers, for example they confidently count the number of children present during registration. Good leadership and management by the deputy headteacher ensure that the school meets nearly all of the new national requirements. She knows that there is still more to do in order to bring provision for learning and play outdoors fully in line with national guidance. Although she watches over children's rate of progress with insight, the class teacher does not yet have a clear role in evaluating the effectiveness of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils know how to reach their longer-term learning targets.
- In the Reception class, ensure that the provision for children to learn and play outdoors meets all the latest national guidance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement, including that of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Years 2 and 5. Standards are also above the national expectation in ICT, and the standard of Year 5 work on display in art and design is also above national expectation. Pupils' progress in writing is now accelerating because of a focus on raising standards, especially for younger boys. A dip in achievement in Year 4 in mathematics is also being addressed by improving the teaching of mental and oral skills. Pupils achieve well in science because of teachers' high expectations of them to plan and carry out investigations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, plays a significant part in their academic success. They say how much they enjoy school and love taking part in all that it has to offer. They are polite, friendly, show consideration

to others and are extremely well behaved, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils' excellent knowledge of how to keep healthy is reflected in the national awards. They know how to keep themselves safe, for example they say that they must work quietly in physical education lessons, so that the teacher can hear everything that happens. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils enjoy being part of their school community and relish opportunities to carry out a wide range of responsibilities, such as being school councillors, play leaders or class monitors. They get involved in the local community whenever they can, for example through charitable fundraising and representing their school in sporting and musical events. Pupils' acquisition of good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning ensure that most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Hard-working and enthusiastic teachers set high expectations and forge positive relationships with their pupils. Consequently, pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons, are keen to learn and to try their best. Lessons have a clear purpose that pupils understand. Teachers hold pupils' interest by making purposeful links with previous lessons and by questioning pupils skilfully. Teachers' good expertise is seen in the well planned and well organised teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. It is also evident, for example, in inspired teaching of investigative science, and in the range of art and design media through which Year 5 pupils express their ideas so carefully and thoughtfully. Teachers regularly assess how well pupils are doing and give them feedback in a wide variety of ways. Pupils, however, are often unclear about what they have to do to in order to reach their longer-term learning targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good quality, enriching curriculum enables pupils of all abilities and ethnic heritages to enjoy learning and to make good progress. Adaptations to the curriculum for writing are helping to raise standards, especially for boys. High quality provision for ICT enhances pupils' progress in most subjects. Good provision for personal and social development and the promotion of good academic basic skills ensure that pupils have every chance to succeed at their next school. Pupils learn to play their part as members of the school and of local communities. Their growing understanding of our global community is encouraged. Good links with other schools result in a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to take part in seasonal sport. The school is seeking to extend opportunities for the growing number of pupils with musical talents to perform for others.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of care and support ensures that pupils feel safe and enjoy learning. Procedures for protecting and safeguarding them are in place. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that there is always an adult to turn to for help if they need it. Pupils who transfer from other schools soon settle in because their teachers quickly get to know them. Other pupils welcome and befriend them and the happy and caring ethos makes them feel that they 'belong'. Good links

with outside agencies ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have specialist help if needed. Classroom assistants provide friendly and caring support in lessons. The school closely monitors and tracks pupils' progress, so that action can be taken to tackle any underachievement. Teachers' marking of pupils' work often helps them to know how to improve. A school priority is to improve the academic guidance for pupils in order to help them better understand what they need to do to meet their individual longer-term learning targets. The school acknowledges that there is further work to do in this area.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Effective leadership and management ensure that pupils receive a good quality education, and usually meet challenging learning targets. The school has made good improvement on several fronts since the previous inspection. As well as raising standards by Year 2 in mathematics, staff have responded well to several significant national initiatives. They have also revised the curriculum and gained recognition for promoting pupils' good personal development through the Investor in Pupils Award. Key to these improvements is the strong teamwork of the dedicated headteacher, very capable deputy headteacher and knowledgeable senior teacher. Together, they steer the school in the right direction, keeping pupils' needs clearly in mind. Following the previous inspection, the school initially made good progress in improving governance. However, more recently, changes of governors and a period when the governing body lacked a chairperson have meant that currently governance remains satisfactory. Nevertheless, governors ensure that the school meets requirements and provides good value for money. They are very supportive and keen to improve further.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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
The extent to which 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	2
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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	3
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**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for answering all my questions so patiently and thoughtfully. You are polite, friendly and extremely well behaved pupils. I was impressed with how much you care about one another and enjoy helping out by being monitors, play leaders and school councillors. I could see why you are so proud of the new playground that you have helped to create. When you work together in lessons, you are very sensible indeed, and I was very pleased to see you all enjoying the many challenges that teachers give you.

You go to a good school. You make good progress and the standard of your work is above what is expected for your ages. Your teachers and all the adults care about you a great deal and work hard to make sure that you enjoy school and have whatever help you need in order to do well. You know a lot about healthy lifestyles, and I could see that you do a lot of work, such as those beautiful paper collages of fruit, that helps you to remember to eat healthily. The pupils who prepared drinking water containers for the day of the inspection were very careful not to waste water! You have a lot of exciting and interesting lessons that help you to improve in literacy, numeracy and in all other subjects. Your ICT skills are very good indeed. You are well prepared for going to middle school at the end of Year 5.

Your headteacher and other staff work hard to make sure that your school keeps improving. I have asked them to work with the school governors in order to make sure that Reception children have more chances to learn outdoors. I have also asked them to tell you what you have to do in order to reach the next level of work. You can help by asking teachers about your own learning targets and checking how well you are doing towards reaching them.