

# Kirkstall Valley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107887
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	324670
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Hughes

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	209
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sam Clarke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Beverley Clay
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Argie Road Leeds West Yorkshire LS4 2QZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2756183
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2306186

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, particularly girls and pupils with particular gifts and talents; the strengths of pupils' personal development and well-being, the curriculum, care, guidance and support pupils enjoy; and the impact of leaders on improving the school's performance. Evidence was collected from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, test results, pupils' current work, teachers' records and monitoring; observation of teaching and discussions with senior leaders, pupils, governors and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This average-sized school, one mile from Leeds city centre, draws pupils from a neighbourhood of economic and social disadvantage, although the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. A smaller than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is more than double the national average. Many of these are of Asian heritage. Approximately one third of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is nearly three times the national average. The number of pupils on roll fell for several years but is rising again as more children from refugee families and others of Polish heritage join the school. The school has achieved several awards including Activemark Gold and Advanced National Healthy School status. The school offers 15 fully flexible hours of free Nursery provision per week. Parents can pay to extend these hours.

The school provides a breakfast club. There is also an after-school club available to Kirkstall Valley pupils at the local children's centre, which is run by a private provider. A separate inspection report for the after-school provision is available on the Ofsted website.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Kirkstall Valley Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. It promotes pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It greatly enhances their enjoyment of school through the provision of a very high quality curriculum. First-class pastoral care, personal support and academic guidance enable pupils to enjoy every aspect of school life and to establish a strong foundation for future success. A keen sense of community unifies the school and pupils from 14 nationalities learn harmoniously, side by side. Parents, pupils, staff and governors declare this a happy place in which to learn, work and grow. Leaders know all the pupils and their families extremely well and so provide just the right levels of support, both academic and pastoral. Parents readily acknowledge this in comments such as, 'The school goes the extra mile for us,' and, 'I am forever grateful to the school – they have saved us.'

All pupils achieve well. Currently, standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2, although in 2008, they were below average in the mathematics assessments. The school has already put in place systems to address last year's relative weakness in mathematics. At Year 6, standards have varied in recent years. They are now above average overall in English, mathematics and science and are strongest in science. Pupils' work and their responses in lessons show increasing confidence and an improving picture. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in their work continues to grow. Although girls did not do as well as boys last year, inspectors found no evidence that this was due to specific teaching or curriculum issues but was more a result of the profiles of pupils in those year groups. Girls engage fully in lessons, make their views known and enjoy school just as much as boys.

The school's detailed tracking systems, and pupils' current work, show that a larger proportion of pupils are making good or very good progress this year. This is due to robust assessment and tracking systems that provide copious data. From this, teachers evaluate each pupil's progress, accurately identify their next learning steps and set up support programmes for individual pupils when appropriate. Senior leaders hold each member of staff to account for the progress that their pupils make and rigorously monitor the quality of teaching.

Teachers prepare lessons well and plan activities with clear success criteria so pupils know exactly what to do. The day flows well, with no time wasted, as pupils switch easily from whole-class to group or individual activities. Teachers explain clearly, and recap often, what pupils need to do, so pupils work with confidence, persevere well and succeed in their learning. Adults encourage them to explain, reason, and share ideas sensibly during 'talking partner' times. Pupils understand their targets very well and refer to them in lessons. They readily assess their own work and how well they met lesson objectives. For instance, one pupil wrote, 'I have not given my opinion and have only included facts and research,' when assessing how well he completed a task on fact versus opinion. Informative teachers' marking indicates pupils' successes and how they can improve further.

All adults take their duty of care very seriously. The safeguarding of pupils meets the current legal requirements. Pupils say, 'Teachers understand if we feel worried,' and know they can always ask for help. In this inclusive community, staff identify clearly pupils' individual learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ensure that the appropriate support programmes are in place. Teachers and teaching assistants work seamlessly and ensure that all pupils participate in and make good progress across the curriculum. Skilled staff, some bilingual, provide enjoyable

programmes to develop pupils' skills as they learn to speak English as an additional language. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are vocal in their praise of all the school does to integrate their children, pointing out that the school meets children's needs, 'in the best possible way'. Staff also monitor closely the progress of pupils with identified gifts and talents and ensure that they receive appropriate levels of challenge.

Pupils brim with enthusiasm and confirm that 'lessons are fun'. They readily accept the consistently high expectations all adults have of them. Their outstanding behaviour and highly positive attitudes to learning, coupled with the respectful way they treat each other, create a purposeful learning atmosphere. Pupils learn to control their emotions and use the excellent strategies adults provide. For example, during an infant assembly pupils thought about how they could help themselves when angry and learned strategies such as 'Walk away, take a deep breath and blow the anger out.' Pupils show tolerance and can explain how their behaviour and feelings affect others. The school very successfully promotes pupils' interest in other cultures and faiths as, for instance, it works towards the Stephen Lawrence Award. Parents strongly perceive that their children learn much about diversity and how to live with others. Pupils take on responsibility well; eco-warriors' sort the compost and other pupils sell healthy snacks. The school is bright, clean and secure. The unusual, tiered outdoor areas provide purposeful environments for pupils to enjoy at breaks and lunchtime. Nutritious school meals promote pupils' understanding of healthy eating. Pupils grow vegetables in the 'market garden' and benefit from this in terms of the quality of food they eat and the exercise they take in digging and planting.

Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Despite the school's best efforts, its diverse intake means that some pupils are absent, often overseas, for lengthy periods that can spill into term time. Along with some unavoidable medical absences, this reduces overall attendance to average.

Senior leaders plan an engaging curriculum that meets the needs of its diverse population of pupils extremely well. Eye-catching artefacts, pupils' work and aspirational messages capture pupils' imagination and so stimulate their academic development and personal maturity. Interesting links between subjects help pupils to consolidate their learning. Extensive contact with local organisations develops pupils' understanding of the world beyond school. For example, 'intergenerational circle times' provide pupils and senior members of the community with opportunities to discuss issues and to assimilate different opinions. Parents describe the school as 'a hive of happy activity'.

The headteacher shows clear commitment to school improvement and provides excellent vision and aspiration for the school. She is ably supported by the assistant headteacher, who also leads by example and models high quality teaching and curriculum planning for staff. Together, they address any personnel issues promptly and are very effective in resolving any periods of staff change. The headteacher establishes excellent partnerships with local agencies, schools and organisations. These enrich pupils' learning and provide a varied range of extra-curricular and other opportunities. International weeks improve pupils' and parents' global awareness and the school actively participates in a jointly planned programme of local initiatives to cement community cohesion. Some subject leaders are relatively new and continue to grow in influence. The governing body continues to provide effective support for the school and has a clear view of priorities. Conscientious administrators assure the school's daily smooth running and financial probity. The school provides good value for money. A good record of past improvement, coupled with strong leadership, demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well in all areas of learning due to consistently good quality provision in both Early Years Foundation Stage classes. Elements of children's personal development are strong. Historically, children now higher up the school entered the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those typically expected for their age, particularly their communication, language and literacy skills. Children now join with skills often well below those typically expected. More than half the children joining the school speak English as an additional language. By the time they move into Year 1, standards overall are at the levels expected for children of this age although many reach a good level of development in their personal and social skills. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that the setting provides all the required elements for children this age. The busy learning environment beckons children to interact with the plentiful resources, both inside and outdoors, and staff provide stimulating opportunities for children to develop their skills. They learn much about how to live safe and healthy lives. Many of the lively activities capture children's imaginations. For example, children were transfixed by the 'magic box' into which their teacher posted flat shapes that 'transformed' into solids as she pulled them out again. Adults have a very good knowledge of what children this age need to learn and this helps children to make good gains in their development. Nevertheless, staff sometimes limit children's independent learning when they offer too much support for children during activities.

Children flourish here because adults meet their welfare needs exceptionally well. High quality relationships ensure that children relax and concentrate on the many new experiences they encounter. High quality support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and special educational needs enables children to join in happily with their peers. Adults encourage them gently to take care of their own personal needs wherever possible, such as blowing their noses and throwing the tissue in the bin. There is high quality support for children who speak English as an additional language and this stands them in good stead for their future learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop further children's independent learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

**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](http://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
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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 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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

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

Inspection of Kirkstall Valley Primary School, Leeds, LS4 2QZ

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed the day we spent with you. You made us so welcome and we found out a lot by talking to you. Your views on school were very interesting.

You clearly enjoy school and are proud to be part of the Kirkstall Valley 'family'. You told us that this is a fun and friendly school. We agree and judge that there are many good, and several outstanding (I'm trying to use 'wow' words too!) elements to praise in your school. Kirkstall Valley continues to be a good school. Well done all of you who manage to come to school every day – keep trying to improve your attendance because being reliable will help you succeed as you grow older and get a job. You all behave so well and make the most of the good teaching and interesting activities that your teachers plan in lessons. All of this helps you to achieve well, whatever your individual needs may be, and enables more of you to reach above average standards in your work. Your school is very good at helping your parents and carers to take an interest in school life. We also approve of all the strong links you have with the local and wider community. Many of you have different heritages and speak different languages at home. It is a delight to see how well you all work and play together and how you respect each other's faiths, cultures and customs.

Part of our job is to see what your school could do better. We have asked your headteacher to make sure that children in Nursery and Reception make even more choices for themselves as this will help them learn more and develop even greater independence.

Keep working hard, growing those tasty vegetables, and enjoying school!