

Kirk Hammerton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121572
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327519
Inspection date	4 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	48
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 Eric Bridges
Headteacher	Mr Paul O'Rourke
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St John's Grove Kirk Hammerton York North Yorkshire YO26 8DE

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	4 June 2009
Inspection number	327519

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average school. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are more favourable than average. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The governing body is responsible for an after-school club. The school has achieved Activemark, Healthy School and Inclusion Quality Mark Level 3 (Establishing Inclusion) Awards. It is an Investor in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kirk Hammerton Church of England School provides a good education for its pupils. The school has made substantial improvement since its last inspection under the good leadership of the headteacher and governors. An effective team of teachers manage the school well alongside the headteacher. All pupils are valued as individuals. Links with other schools and outside agencies are well developed. This benefits pupils' learning and their extra-curricular opportunities. Parents hold the school in high regard. 'A great school', sums up the vast majority of parental views.

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen sharply from below average in the 2006 national tests to be above average in 2007 and 2008. In 2008, all pupils reached the level expected nationally (Level 4). Present standards in Year 6 remain above average and a greater proportion of pupils than in the previous year are working at Level 5 in writing. Pupils' progress, including that of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, has accelerated throughout the school because of good teaching, which is guided by a recently revised, effective curriculum.

The school cares for its pupils well both academically and pastorally. Pupils' exemplary behaviour assists their learning as well as their enjoyment of school. Attendance rates are good. Pupils relate well to other pupils and staff. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, the gardening club encourages pupils to grow and eat healthy foods. The superb outdoor facilities provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities both within lessons and in out-of-school activities. When requested, pupils willingly help staff though they are rather reticent in taking initiative for their own learning or expressing their views. Their awareness of diverse national and international communities and major world faiths is limited. Pupils are well prepared for future education because of their superb behaviour and good standards in basic skills.

Lessons are well organised and planned to meet pupils' learning needs. Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The teaching constructively ensures pupils gain a good body of knowledge of basic skills. However, occasionally teaching is too directed and pupils are not given sufficient time to find out things for themselves or to discuss their learning with others. Attractive displays celebrate pupils' efforts in all subjects.

Together the headteacher and governors have improved the school through well thought out plans and close checking of the success of initiatives and their effect on pupils' learning. The recent successes provide it with good capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well. Effective links with parents and the local playgroup ensure that children settle well into this warm, stimulating environment. As a result, they enjoy their time at school. Children start school with a range of skills, knowledge and understanding that is above that expected for children of this age. They make good progress and by the end of the Reception, children significantly exceed the standards set nationally for children of this age. The children play well together, are enthusiastic about their learning and behave very well. Good teaching combined with a well planned curriculum provides a rich variety of experiences that help children make good progress

in all areas of learning, including their personal, social and emotional development. The indoor area is bright, stimulating and provides a good focus on personal development and basic skills as well as the wider curriculum. Children are helped to adopt safe and healthy practices. For example, in the pizza cafe, they are reminded to wash their hands before making pizza toppings and to sit carefully when eating their snack. Outdoor provision is good but it is not used well enough to link with indoor learning activities and to encourage independent and creative learning. Children are safe and well cared for. Welfare is promoted well and all requirements are met. Leadership and management are good and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision of how provision can be further improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently and to discuss their learning with others.
- Extend pupils' awareness of other national and international communities and major world faiths.
- Develop the linking of work indoors with outdoors in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards vary from year to year because of small numbers of pupils in each year group, ranging from five to ten. Generally, standards range from above to well above average. In the 2008 Year 2 tests standards were above average. Standards since 2007 have been much higher than in 2006. Present standards in Year 2 are high and they are above average in Year 6, representing good progress from their starting points for these pupils. Pupils' progress in all year groups is good. Successful initiatives to develop pupils' writing skills have narrowed the gap between standards in reading and writing and are still proving effective. The school is aware that pupils' handwriting and presentation of work is too variable. Too few pupils in Years 3 to 6 use a joined style of handwriting. In Years 1 and 2 too many pupils are holding their pencils incorrectly when writing. Challenging targets are being exceeded as a result of good teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Moral and social development is good. Good links with the local church support pupils' good spiritual development. Pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory. Visitors and the school's work on themes such as 'Diversity' assist pupils' cultural awareness, though multicultural links and the study of major world faiths are less well developed. Enjoyment of learning is reflected in good attendance and superb behaviour. Pupils are polite and courteous though they are reluctant to express confidently their ideas. They are aware of how to keep healthy, take exercise and are well informed about the consequences of lifestyle choices. They say they feel safe and know about the importance of staying safe when they cycle to school. However, many pupils are unsure of the safe use of the Internet. Pupils benefit from the school's association with the local schools sports partnership. They appreciate the range of sporting opportunities available such as dance, football and rugby. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as setting up the school healthy tuck shop at playtime and helping in the dining hall at lunchtime. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community. They enjoy visiting a local residential home and performing at the village concert. Pupils demonstrate their awareness of the needs of others by fundraising for a wide range of local and national charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and this matches the progress pupils make in their learning. In lessons, teachers prepare interesting challenges for pupils that are well matched to their different ages and abilities. Opportunities are sometimes missed to extend and consolidate learning through discussion either as a whole class or between pupils. Teachers clearly explain to pupils what they are to learn. As a result, pupils work diligently which enables them to make good progress but they are only infrequently given opportunities to extend their learning through self-initiated activities. The pace of learning is generally brisk, such as when pupils developed their basic number skills in an exciting and challenging outdoor task. Occasionally, time spent listening to the teacher on the carpet is excessive and the questioning of pupils is not linked sufficiently to their level of attainment. High expectations of work and behaviour positively assist pupils' enjoyment and rate of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recently, the curriculum has been successfully redesigned with a strong emphasis on a themed approach, which links different subjects together. For example, a study of aspects of the 20th century drew together learning about recent history, music and art, as well as providing purposeful opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. Visits to a workshop for blind people and a visit by an Indian dance group enhanced pupils' awareness of others. Pupils studied different churches and cathedrals though no visits were made to the local minster or places of worship of other major world faiths. A broad range of extra-curricular activities engage pupils' interest well and many pupils attend the after-school club. Residential visits and sporting competitions with other local schools, such as cross-country and football, encourage pupils to lead healthy lifestyles and add to the enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A caring, inclusive ethos helps all pupils to achieve well. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Teachers and teaching assistants help these pupils to make good progress. In addition, close and effective links with other agencies such as the speech and language service provide specialist support for pupils. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Pupils feel safe and know that adults within the school will help them. Academic guidance is good. Teachers know pupils well and track their progress carefully to help to ensure that they make successful steps in their learning. Pupils' targets for mathematics and writing guide them on how to improve their work. Most marking tells pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work. However, this practice is not evident in all classes. An overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with the way the school cares for their children and appreciate the hard work of all staff. Good links with the local secondary school ease pupils smoothly into the next stage of their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership's drive to improve learning has been successful. The governors take a key role together with the headteacher in school improvement. Subject leadership has been recently, successfully revised with a focus on English, mathematics and science and a collegiate approach to the management of other subjects. This system is manageable within this small school and links well with the thematic approach to the curriculum. Lesson observations and performance management are well planned resulting in increasing rates of pupils' progress. Thorough tracking systems have been introduced to ensure pupils' achievement is carefully assessed and equality of opportunity for all. The promotion of community cohesion is stronger at a local level than nationally or internationally. It is a school priority for development. Governors have agreed a policy for community cohesion. Steps have begun to develop outreach to other communities and to embed this work into the curriculum. Partnership with parents is strong and this was reflected in their very positive response to the inspection questionnaire about all aspects of the school's work.

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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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	3
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**

The inspection team enjoyed the day we spent at your school. You were friendly and courteous and helped us a great deal in finding out about Kirk Hammerton. Your school is a good school and is run well by the headteacher, staff and governors. Teaching and learning are good and build on a well thought out curriculum. As a result, you make good progress in your learning. You are cared for well and helped to improve, including those of you who find learning difficult.

During the time you are at the school your achievement is good. In Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) the youngest children have a good start to schooling and achieve well. To improve the Early Years Foundation Stage I have asked the school to link work indoors more with outdoor activities.

In Years 1 to 6 you make good progress. The standards you reach by the time you leave the school at the end of Year 6 are above average and reflect this good progress during your time at the school. Your behaviour is superb. You enjoy learning and you get on well with each other and the staff. The school ensures that you are all treated equally well. You are well prepared for future learning. Your parents are pleased with the education experiences you have and the care provided for you.

The headteacher and governors know how to improve the school further. However, I have asked them to provide more opportunities for you to work independently and to discuss your learning with others. I also want you to be more aware of other national and international communities and major world faiths.

I trust that you will continue to work with the staff and your headteacher to help them to continue to improve the school. I wish you well for the future.