

Kirkleatham Hall School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111777
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	337736
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Marian Thomas

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr D Thomson
Headteacher	Mrs G Naylor
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, teaching staff and school leaders. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning for lessons, school leaders' development plans and samples of pupils' work. They also took into account the views of 31 staff, 27 pupils and 29 parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' work in mathematics, English, and information and communication technology (ICT)
- how well the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all learners
- the progress of different groups of pupils
- how well governors support the school.

Information about the school

Kirkleatham Hall is a day special school. The school serves a very wide geographical area. All pupils have either severe or profound multiple learning difficulties and a statement of special educational needs. In addition, there is an increasing number of pupils with complex medical needs and for whom autistic spectrum disorder is their predominant learning difficulty. Currently, most pupils are of White British origin and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has links with local schools and colleges and is part of a school sports partnership, sharing a school sports coordinator with another school in the area. The school is also now part of a trust with four local secondary schools. The school has achieved accreditation for Healthy Schools, Sportsmark, Active Mark, and Investors in People.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Kirkleatham Hall is a good school, which has many strengths. The excellent care, guidance and support which it provides for all pupils and the success with which their complex special needs are met enable them to make good progress both personally and academically. The school also makes excellent provision, with good outcomes, for students in its sixth form. Parents and carers appreciate the work of school staff in supporting their children. One commented, Kirkleatham Hall is brilliant. Staff are just brilliant. They have helped my child every step of the way.' This demonstrates the good relationships that school has built with parents and carers.

The headteacher and senior leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they ensure the quality of provision necessary for them to do so. Self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate and rigorous, and findings are acted upon to good effect. The school's major strength is its ability to recognise and support the diverse needs of all pupils. This ensures barriers to learning are minimised. Safeguarding documentation and procedures are excellent, and are securely in place. Since the last inspection the school has significantly improved aspects of its performance. For example, it has improved the number of accredited courses available to students in the sixth form and ensured all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are now covered. This demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

From an excellent start in Early Years Foundation Stage pupils grow in confidence as they move through school. They thoroughly enjoy school and are exceptionally clear about how to stay healthy. Behaviour is good both within and outside the classroom. Pupils say they feel safe. Excellent links with outside agencies have been developed which support pupils' learning and development significantly. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the local community and make their own strong contribution to it. However, links to promote their awareness of life in a multi-ethnic society are limited.

Teaching is good in the majority of classrooms and is based on clear assessment of pupils' learning needs. Overall progress is good in most subjects. However, in ICT pupils' progress is just satisfactory. This is because in a small number of lessons the teaching style and delivery, and the curriculum offered, do not match the needs of all learners. On these occasions, learning slows down and pupils sometimes grow restless.

A detailed assessment system is securely in place. This ensures that monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress towards their targets is effective in all subjects. Teaching assistants provide a good level of support in lessons. The curriculum is highly personalised and meets the needs of learners exceptionally well. Monitoring of the curriculum by coordinators is effective and well established.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in ICT, by:
 - ensuring that the teaching of ICT is as consistently good as in other curriculum areas and that sufficient time is given to developing pupils' skills.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion, by:
 - increasing and extending links with communities in the wider United Kingdom and abroad.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils joining the school settle quickly and respond positively to their individual learning programmes. These enable pupils to work consistently and achieve well in most areas of the curriculum. This was demonstrated well in a mathematics lesson for pupils with significant learning needs. All pupils participated exceptionally well, working in small groups on a variety of different activities. One pupil showed great determination and completed a number matching task which, given the complex nature of this pupil's learning needs, was impressive. Occasionally in ICT, learning slows when planned activities do not reflect pupils' needs closely enough.

All groups of pupils, including those on the autistic spectrum and pupils who are looked after by the local authority, make equally good progress. This is because learning environments are specifically designed to meet the needs of differing groups of pupils. For example, pupils with the greatest learning needs respond very positively to the stimulating, bright and colourful resources and equipment in their classroom. Conversely, pupils on the autistic spectrum concentrate well within classrooms that have lower levels of stimulation.

Pupils feel safe because they know staff are supportive and help them at all times. Most clearly enjoy school. As one student in the sixth form commented, 'We all love it here and I really don't want to leave.' Pupils recognise the importance of eating healthy meals and have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet. They enjoy the many and different sporting opportunities offered and appreciate the part this plays in a healthy lifestyle. Two current pupils have been chosen to compete in the 2011 Special Olympics taking place in Athens. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community both in and outside school by listening to and appreciating the needs of others. For example, pupils with significant learning needs have helped construct a nature trail which benefits local people and visitors to the area. Pupils' excellent overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in the way in which they react to each other and take care of the environment. However, they do not yet have a well-developed awareness of communities beyond those represented in the immediate locality.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use assessment information effectively to set achievable targets for pupils. All staff use ICT well to support pupils' learning and promote independence. Planning of lessons is conscientious in most classrooms and attention is given to ensuring work is modified to meet the different needs of pupils. Marking of pupils' work takes many forms and ensures they are aware of what is needed to improve. Support staff are effectively trained and work closely with teachers to support pupils' learning. However, the teaching of ICT is not as good as in other subjects and, as a result, pupils make less good progress. The curriculum is exceptionally well organised and is highly personalised to meet the needs of learners. It is imaginatively enhanced by many visits and activities away from the classroom. For example, a recent visit to a local outdoor pursuit centre enabled pupils to develop team building skills as well as offering them a range of outdoor experiences. This was described by one pupil as, 'Just brilliant'. Residential visits in the sixth form help develop students' independence.

As a result of high quality care, guidance and support, pupils feel there is always someone who will listen and help. A careful and thorough assessment is undertaken when pupils arrive at the school, which is then used to target support effectively. Vulnerable pupils are well supported and this is helped by the excellent links with many outside agencies. Careful monitoring by school staff and the building of good

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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relationships with parents and carers ensure that attendance levels are above average. Transition arrangements are securely in place and pupils are very well prepared for moving to the next phase in their education and the world of work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The insightful and visionary leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders is moving the school forward well and ensuring good outcomes for pupils. This, coupled with excellent partnerships forged with outside agencies, is driving improvement further. The governing body has implemented good procedures to ensure the health and well-being of all pupils. The governors offer a good level of support to the school and challenge to senior leaders. Procedures ensure all safeguarding requirements are met and that practice is of an excellent standard. The strength and quality of these procedures mean that any safeguarding issues are dealt with very effectively by senior leaders. This was clearly evidenced by the excellent levels of staffing and organisation put in place to ensure the safe arrival and departure of pupils. This is necessary owing to the exceptionally difficult layout of the entrance to the school. The local authority is aware of the problems and is to take action. Leaders and managers have ensured that the school is a highly inclusive community. Systems to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination within school are good. The school works hard and successfully to eliminate any gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils. Through the recently formed partnership with four local secondary schools, leaders have built successful links that benefit pupils and the local community. Some links with the global community are established. However, there are too few links to other communities to improve and develop pupils' understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society. The school makes great efforts to engage all parents and carers. The work of school staff ensures they are kept well informed about their child's successes. Parent education programmes and daily diary links with home are in place and, as a result, most parents and carers are appreciative of the ongoing work of the school. The school ensures good outcomes for pupils, many of whom have significant needs. It does this on a well controlled budget and provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the early years of education get off to an excellent start and make outstanding progress. This is because of the excellent quality of care and welfare that staff provide, which supports children's learning exceptionally well. Children's personal, social and emotional development is outstanding because staff create exceptionally warm and positive relationships. They promote children's self-confidence well through the good use of praise and celebration of their achievements. Behaviour is good and children play happily with each other both indoors and in the outdoor play area. Skills to develop independence and choice are very well promoted by the range of activities on offer. Planning of activities is of exceptional quality and is very closely linked to children's learning needs. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are excellent and there are close links to the school's leadership team. Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent, as are those with outside agencies and these contribute well to the excellent progress children make.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Sixth form

Students make good progress in the good quality sixth form. The curriculum enables them to achieve well in the functional skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The wide variety of vocational options offered enables all students to gain sufficient experience and qualifications to move on to the next phase of their education. With the help and support from a dedicated and motivated staff, many students complete Duke of Edinburgh awards to bronze and silver standards. This year, two students have completed their gold award, which is very impressive. As well as the opportunities for work-related learning provided by horticulture, woodwork, catering, and hair and beauty, the subjects offered also develop skills useful in helping students to live independently when they leave school. For example, students are taught to handle money through working in an enterprise scheme, enabling them to budget wisely and to make independent choices. This helps prepare students exceptionally well for the next phase in their education. Similarly, a coherent programme of sex and relationship education, carefully tailored to meet their individual needs, helps to affirm students' confidence about their rights and responsibilities. Students take responsibility for planning and evaluating their own learning and provide good support to one another in developing and celebrating their achievements. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of students' needs and very high expectations of students. As a result, senior leaders are constantly reviewing and effectively evaluating the work of the sixth form.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Twenty nine responses were received by the inspection team from parents and carers. This represents just under a third of the school population and was a moderate response rate. The majority of questionnaires were wholly positive and supported the work of the school. Although several raised concerns about the progress of their children, the inspection team found pupil progress to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirkleatham Hall School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	69	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	72	8	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	55	12	41	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	55	10	34	3	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	66	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	59	10	34	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	55	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	52	11	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	62	9	31	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	59	10	34	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	59	9	31	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	69	8	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	66	10	34	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirkleatham Hall School, Redcar, TS10 4QR

Thank you very much for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. It was lovely to meet you all and to hear how much you enjoy coming to school. We send a special 'thank you' to those of you who gave up your time to talk to us. We agree with those of you that told us that you think your school is good. These are the things we liked the most:

- the friendly welcome you all give to visitors
- the good way in which staff care for you and help you to make future choices
- the way in which you all work hard and have fun
- the way in which you help each other and the local community.

In order to make your school even better we have asked your teachers to:

- ensure you all improve your information and communication technology skills and make as much progress in this subject as in mathematics, English and science
- give you more opportunities to experience other cultures to help you to get a better understanding of how other people live their lives.

Thank you once again for such a lovely welcome and good luck to all of you who are busy writing important letters.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marian Thomas

Lead inspector

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