

Kirkstall St Stephen's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108043
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	354378
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Brear
Headteacher	Mr Steven Viles
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
School address	Morris Lane Leeds West Yorkshire LS5 3JD
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and eight teachers were observed. The inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils and with the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors observed the school's work, including a review of improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress and monitoring the quality of teaching, records demonstrating the arrangements for safeguarding and a sample of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed 52 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 110 from pupils and 24 from staff.

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

- the rate of pupils' progress, particularly between Years 3 and 6 in mathematics and science
- pupils' attendance and the effectiveness of procedures to improve it
- how well teachers use assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' varying abilities
- the quality of the curriculum, particularly how well it is adapted to boost the needs of lower attaining pupils in mathematics, and the breadth of science curriculum for pupils of all abilities
- how effectively senior leaders and subject coordinators contribute to reviewing pupils' progress and monitoring the quality of provision.

Information about the school

The large majority of pupils at this average-sized school are from White British backgrounds. The remainder come from an increasingly diverse range of heritages. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, although very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Unusually high numbers of pupils leave or join the school partway through their education. This is, in part, due to the influx of pupils following the closure of a nearby school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school holds the Investors in People award, and has achieved Healthy School status. An independently run pre-school and before- and after-school club operates on the school site but was not part of this inspection. The headteacher took up post in January 2009.

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

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well to reach average attainment by Year 6. In this harmonious, friendly, safe and welcoming setting, pupils show good attitudes to learning and behave well. They are polite, courteous and respectful to adults and to one another and pupils of all ages contribute positively to their vibrant school community. Parents and carers are very supportive. They say that their children learn in 'a supportive, caring and consistently inclusive setting' and acknowledge that their children are 'transformed into confident, happy and sociable young adults'.

Children make good progress in Reception and, after this successful start, continue to learn well until the end of Year 6. Attainment is on a rising trend and in English is rising rapidly so that by Year 6 it is now above average. This reflects good procedures to regularly assess pupils' skills and frequent opportunities for pupils to practise their developing skills and to understand how well they are getting on in reaching their challenging learning targets. Although attainment in mathematics and science is also starting to rise, it is rising at a slower rate than in English. In mathematics, opportunities to develop pupils' mental calculation and problem-solving skills are sometimes overlooked and pupils are not yet fully clear about their learning targets. Similarly, the range of support programmes in mathematics, such as to boost the attainment of lower attaining pupils' between Years 3 and 6, is still developing. In science, there is not always sufficient curriculum time allocated to cover each aspect of the curriculum with the frequency or depth that will enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills at a good rate.

Leaders and managers work well together to drive improvement forward. The rigour with which they track and analyse pupils' performance, especially to identify any variances in rates of progress, such as between classes, subjects or specific pupil groups, ensures that improvement priorities are identified swiftly and precisely. This results in a very thorough albeit, in some respects, overly cautious, nonetheless, overall, accurate self-evaluation. This illustrates that the school's capacity to improve is good. This reflects the many improvements evident since the previous inspection. Improved attainment by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 2 and Year 6, improved attendance and effective steps to extend opportunities to challenge more able pupils are all examples of recent successes. At the same time, under the very good leadership of the headteacher, new senior leaders and subject leaders are strengthening their skills, such as in reviewing pupil performance information and monitoring the quality of provision. However, in science, their work is hampered because the procedures to assess pupils' knowledge in this subject are yet to be firmly established.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics, particularly between Years 3 and 6 by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their mental calculation and problem-solving skills
 - making sure pupils are clear about their precise learning targets and the next steps to attain them
 - extending the range of support programmes between Years 3 and 6 for pupils who are working below nationally expected levels.
- Raise attainment in science by:
 - improving procedures to regularly assess pupils' skills and use this to plan work that meets pupils' varying learning needs
 - ensuring more time is allocated to covering each aspect of the curriculum and in sufficient depth to enable pupils to build their skills and knowledge at a good rate
 - improving the rigour with which leaders and managers review pupils' progress and monitor the quality of provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Achievement is good. In lessons, pupils behave well. They work at a good pace, particularly when working independently or collaboratively. Challenging activities help to sustain their concentration and, as a result, pupils produce a good standard of work. Pupils are attentive and keen to learn and respond well to teachers' questions. Occasionally, their concentration drifts when they sit as a whole group listening to their teacher, such as at the start or end of lessons. This is because teachers' questioning skills do not always keep them all on their toes. Even so, between Years 1 and 6, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Between Years 3 and 6, progress, although good, is uneven. It accelerates to a rapid rate in Year 6. In recent years, pupils' attainment has varied. This, in part, is due to the arrival of new pupils partway through the year. By Year 2, attainment is average, which reflects good progress from pupils' lower starting points. Attainment in writing by Year 2 has risen dramatically and is now above average.

Pupils of all backgrounds learn together in harmony. They show respect and sensitivity towards one another's similarities and differences. Pupils are very proud of their school and are keen to contribute positively towards it. They relish the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities, for example, as school collective worship or eco-councillors, all of whom influence school decision making. Pupils participate enthusiastically in activities aimed at improving their local environment, such as working alongside the caretaker developing a memorial, wildlife and vegetable garden in the church hall grounds nearby. Following a recent 'safety week', pupils talk knowledgeably about identifying risky situations and know how to act safely within school and beyond.

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Pupils' good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles shows in their eagerness to take part in daily 'wake and shake up' activities and in the healthy choices they make for lunch. Attendance has improved dramatically in a short time and is now broadly average. The confidence, maturity and ease with which pupils discuss their learning together, with adults and with visitors, along with their good progress and advanced skills in using information and communication technology, demonstrate that they are well prepared with the skills they need for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' enthusiasm, good organisation, positive relationships and the careful deployment of support staff all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. In lessons, teachers regularly discuss the learning objectives and 'steps to success' with their pupils. Their planning takes good account of pupils' varying needs, especially in challenging the thinking of more able pupils during independent activities. In English, particularly good-quality marking ensures that pupils are clear about how they can improve their work. In the best lessons, such as in Year 6, high expectations of the pace

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

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of learning, along with tailored individual questioning during introduction and closure sessions, continually keep all pupils paying full attention.

Successful adaptations to the reading and writing curriculum are helping to raise attainment in English. These include providing more exciting opportunities to write creatively across the subjects, removing worksheet-based activities and extending the range of support programmes to boost the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' enjoyment of school mirrors the good range of practical, active and creative learning opportunities on offer. These are further enriched by a good range of trips, of visitors to the school and of clubs, especially in sport.

Making sure that pupils are well cared for is a high priority. Good quality pastoral support is evident in daily practices. Carefully thought-through arrangements to welcome pupils that join partway through their education ensure they settle quickly into their new environment. The strong contribution of the learning mentor, along with the good partnerships fostered with external support agencies, reflects the school's commitment to helping pupils with additional needs. Determined efforts to promote better attendance with pupils and parents and carers are paying dividends.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff say that 'senior leaders are very supportive', that 'everyone works very well together' and that 'they share a vision to ensure every pupil can achieve well in a safe and supportive setting'. In their quest to do so and to drive improvement forward, leaders forge successful partnerships beyond school and with parents and carers. Links established, such as with the church, nearby schools, the local authority and external support agencies, help to strengthen the quality of provision, for example, by providing staff with professional development opportunities and extensions to the curriculum. The very active Parents' and Teachers' Association provides valuable support in raising additional funds, which are often used to purchase new resources.

A very strong emphasis is placed on the inclusion of all pupils in everything the school has to offer. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress serve to identify quickly and precisely any variances in pupils' performance and participation in school life. This demonstrates the school's good commitment to providing equality of opportunity and to narrowing any gaps. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet current requirements, contributing to the confidence that parents and carers have in the high quality of care.

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The quality of governance is good. Governors structure their work to carefully reflect school improvement priorities and, as a result, hold the school to account, for example, by establishing an 'Improving Attendance Committee'. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. This is reflected in pupils' good understanding, tolerance and respect for diverse cultures and backgrounds other than their own, especially within the school and local communities. Links within the national and global communities are also developing at a good rate.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

When children start in the Reception classes, their skills are usually below those typical for their age. The very warm and caring relationships between adults, known as 'guardian angels', and the children, along with additional support from older pupils who act as 'buddies' and 'reading partners', ensure that children feel safe. This, along with the bright and lively learning environment and exciting activities often based around a theme such as 'chicks', ensures that children quickly develop a thirst for learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Adults make the most of opportunities to encourage children to develop good attitudes to learning, to listen carefully, to respond promptly to instructions, and to talk about their learning sensibly together. As a result, children behave well. Adults work well together to assess children's progress. They record their small steps in achievement carefully, planning future learning based on this knowledge. As a result, learning builds effectively on what children can already do. In recent times, children's progress and skills have been improving. The majority of children now reach the levels that are broadly average at the

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start of Year 1. Children's good progress reflects good leadership and management. Since the previous inspection, the range of opportunities for children to learn outdoors has strengthened. This, along with the improved procedures to track children's progress, the good partnerships fostered with parents and carers and the strengthening links with the adjoining pre-school setting, contributes to this improved picture.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires are extremely supportive. They overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe, are well prepared for their future and that the quality of teaching and leadership and management is good. Inspectors agree. They acknowledge that 'more able pupils are provided with challenging extension work' and particularly appreciate the 'sensitive, caring, supportive and friendly approach of dedicated staff' when their children are in need of additional help. A very small minority of parents and carers say that they do not feel that they are sufficiently well informed about their children's progress. Although arrangements to do so are appropriate, inspectors acknowledge that there remains scope to improve the consistency of the quality of written annual reports to parents. Leaders have already recognised this issue and firm plans are in place to address it.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kirkstall St Stephen's Church of England Primary 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	62	18	35	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	38	73	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	60	17	33	4	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	65	13	25	4	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	36	69	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	56	14	27	5	10	3	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	54	20	38	2	4	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)	30	58	21	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	56	18	35	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	46	21	40	3	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	48	24	46	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	67	16	31	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	63	14	27	3	6	1	2

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.



14 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirkstall St Stephen's Church of England Primary School, Leeds, LS5 3JD

Thank you so much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed being part of your school community. We feel very fortunate that we visited at such an exciting time. Seeing the ducklings hatch out in the Reception class was truly wonderful. I expect you will have great fun naming them, taking care of them, watching them grow and seeing them swim for the first time. No wonder you told us you enjoy coming to school!

You go to a good school. By Year 6, the standards that you reach are similar to those expected and you make good progress. We were particularly pleased to:

- see how well you all get on with each other and learn together so peacefully
- hear how safe you feel and that so many of you come to school every day
- see you take part so enthusiastically in 'wake and shake up' sessions and that you know this helps you stay healthy and prepares you for learning
- find out about the many special jobs you have, from 'school eco and collective worship councillors' to 'Problem Palz and 'buddies'.

I have asked that some improvements be made. These are to make sure that:

- you reach higher standards in mathematics and science
- you are all clear about what your learning targets are in mathematics
- you have more chances to practise your calculation and problem-solving skills
- there is more support available if you need extra help in mathematics
- adults improve the way in which they check on your progress in science
- you get more regular chances to learn science.

You can help by making sure that you tell your teacher if you need extra help and by always checking what you still have to do to reach your learning targets.

I send my very best wishes to you all for a very bright and successful future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kathryn Dodd

Lead inspector

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