

Kirklevington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111565
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	378320
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2012
Lead inspector	Frank Cain

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jennie Beaumont
Headteacher	Sandra Jones
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Frank Cain

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited 10 lessons or parts of lessons taught by five different teachers and he also looked at pupils' work. He listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do. Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, although no responses were recorded. He observed the school's work and looked at documents, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation records, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's own assessment data. The inspector analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff, as well as those from 48 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Kirklevington Primary is a smaller than average-sized primary school, with a lower proportion of girls than found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small percentage is from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the normal time is average. Pupils' attainment exceeds the government's minimum standards. There has been some disruption in staffing in the past two years and several new staff have joined the school since September, including the executive headteacher. The school has been awarded the Eco-Schools award and Healthy School status.

A privately run childcare facility operates on the school site. This is subject to a separate inspection whose report will be available on the Ofsted website.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Kirklevington is a good school. Pupils achieve well. They make good progress throughout the school, but especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and their attainment by the time they leave is generally above the national average. However, attainment in writing is not always as good as in reading. The school is not outstanding because teaching is not yet consistent in driving rapid and sustained progress.
- In most lessons observed, teaching was good and tasks were mostly well targeted at pupils' ability level. In a few lessons, the wide range of pupils' ability was not always fully catered for and, as a consequence, their learning needs were not always met. In a minority of lessons too much teacher talk cuts down the time available for the pupils to show what they could achieve themselves. Marking is detailed, though not all comments told pupils how they could improve their work further.
- Pupils behave well overall in lessons. This contributes to their good progress. They are polite and helpful towards each other, for example opening doors, and older pupils support younger ones as playground 'buddies'. Staff have high expectations and pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The leadership and management of the school are good, including that of the teaching and management of pupils' performance. The headteacher's drive and vision are having a major impact on school improvements since the previous inspection. This demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate progress and raise attainment, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring teaching is consistently good or better throughout the school

- consistently and accurately matching activities in lessons to pupils' learning needs so they are always challenged to achieve well
- consistently providing pupils with feedback which incorporates well-defined next steps for improvement
- giving more scope for pupils to learn independently and develop their writing across the curriculum so that they can achieve by themselves.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment when they leave the school has been above average for three years. All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points across all key stages, but especially in Early Years Foundation Stage. Children in Nursery said that they could not form letters when they started, but proudly showed that they now can write their names on their work. Pupils who show signs that they might be falling behind get speedy access to tuition, outside of lessons, which helps them to improve.

Pupils' progress in lessons is good because they are keen and enthusiastic to be involved. Most apply themselves very well and generate good quality work. They extend their communication skills by readily involving themselves in question and answer sessions. Pupils are enthusiastic to show what they know and understand. In one lesson, debating the question 'whether mobile phones should be allowed in school' pupils used a microphone to maturely and confidently put forward their views on the subject. Support staff were seen in a number of lessons across the school and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. They are skilful at getting pupils to explain and do things for themselves when undertaking practical tasks, which helps their understanding. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall in the classroom and over time.

Pupils' attainment in reading in Years 2 and 6 is above average. This reflects the high priority the school places on developing good literacy skills. Younger pupils say they read frequently outside school and they talk about which books they prefer. Overall, older pupils read confidently and were able to explain and interpret what they were reading well. Attainment in writing in Year 2 was below average in 2011, but the school through its robust tracking was able to demonstrate that the same pupils have since made rapid and secure progress in Year 3. Most parents and carers say that the school meets their children's needs, that they are making good progress and that the school helps them to support their child's learning. Inspection evidence confirms this, but recognises the concern of a very small number of parents and carers regarding the amount of progress being made in a few classes some of the time.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching in lessons is good overall and evidence in books shows that at times it is outstanding. Reception children, for example, used the term 'positional language' to describe the skill of explaining where something is and then proceeded to demonstrate it when building their obstacle course. Teachers have high expectations. They prepare well and employ good questioning skills, getting pupils to explain their answers. Occasionally, the imbalance between times when the teacher talked to the whole class, and when pupils engaged in independent activities, limited the available opportunity for pupils to develop their ideas. Teachers extend pupils' skills across all subjects, as observed when pupils, in science, studied the water cycle, which helped develop their literacy and numeracy well. Teachers use the curriculum effectively to add interest and relevance to lessons. In an English lesson, pupils were designing a new mobile phone, using information and communication technology (ICT). They were using complex persuasive language in order to sell it to potential customers. Good teaching is developing pupils' confidence. One lower-attaining pupil was seen helping some of his peers to successfully complete a multiplication exercise. All pupils' work is thoroughly marked, but it often praises achievement without giving enough advice on how to improve further. In the mixed-age classes, teachers prepare the tasks to challenge all abilities, but there are a few instances when it is less successful. Staff encourage the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils when working through the high standards of personal development they expect from pupils. Adults act as good role models celebrating success so pupils feel valued and in turn behave well. In assembly, children were asked to close their eyes and contemplate on recent achievements they were proud of. The vast majority of parents and all pupils think teaching is good and this was confirmed during the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is good. This is typical for the school, behaviour records show no racist incidents and there are very few instances of poor behaviour being reported. When incidents do occur they are thoroughly investigated by the school. Some pupils are concerned that occasionally behaviour is not always good. Most concerns were about a few pupils talking in class or engaging in immature behaviour in the playground. A few parents and carers also expressed concern about low-level disruption in the classroom, but most felt the behaviour of a very small minority does not disrupt the learning of the majority. In lessons, pupils' attitude to their learning is very positive and they are keen to answer questions. When pupils are fully engaged, behaviour, including attitudes to learning, is at its best. Rarely do staff have to reprove pupils. Teachers and support staff use strategies effectively to deal with any issues that arise. Pupils understand different forms of bullying, none had any concerns and all knew what to do if it did occur. All groups of pupils say they feel safe in school and they have a very good understanding of what makes a safe situation. A child in Reception riding in his 'police car' understood why vehicles had to halt for stop signs 'to stop people getting hurt'. Older pupils were very aware of the dangers they could face when being contacted on the internet.

Attendance is above average and has been for a considerable time and far fewer pupils are absent for long periods compared to other schools nationally. Children are consistently punctual.

Leadership and management

The headteacher makes sure that the talents of all staff are recognised and developed for the benefit of pupils. This was a key area for development in the previous report. There are effective systems for monitoring the school's work, including teaching and learning. Professional development is targeted to make further improvements, for example in the use of ICT by staff and pupils as well as improving literacy. Evidence of the positive impact of this work, both on teaching and learning, was seen during the inspection. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Improvement since the last inspection is evident in the curriculum, which has a strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy across the school. There is good capacity to improve. Visits to Ormesby Hall, for example, where the pupils found out about the lives of evacuees, has helped make subjects more interesting. Enrichment activities are varied. A popular choice is the weekly animation club, where older pupils make films using 3D Plasticine models. Several parents and carers specifically mentioned how good the after-school provision is. The curriculum is well planned and effective in ensuring that all compulsory subjects and skills are covered thoroughly. The phonics scheme is well managed. When teachers and support staff deliver it simultaneously it is done consistently and seamlessly across the school with different groups of pupils.

The promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered well from the time children enter the school. Older pupils are proud to represent the school. The 'pupil ambassadors', for example, visit other schools that serve different communities and bring back ideas for Kirklevington. This experience helps improve pupils' understanding of the outside world as well as providing ideas on how to improve the existing provision such as the outdoor play area equipment. The governing body has a clear understanding of its role and a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, which includes their own self-evaluation. Leaders and managers are successful in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The school has robust systems for identifying and helping groups and individuals progress well and in making sure all activities are accessible to all pupils, making this an inclusive school. Safeguarding requirements are met. In particular, the school is very vigilant in making sure that all visitors are checked before they can gain entry to the main school. A small minority of parents and carers express concern regarding how well they are kept informed of what is happening in the school. The school is seeking ways to successfully address these parental concerns.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kirklevington Primary School, Yarm, TS15 9LX

I want to thank all of you for the very friendly welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. I found the time I spent talking to you, your teachers and other adults enjoyable and rewarding. Here are the main things I found.

- You go to a good school.
- You make good progress and do well because you work hard and receive good teaching.
- Your school is well led and managed and all staff, including the governors, do all they can to help your learning.
- Most of you feel very safe and secure and think the teachers and other adults care about you. Only a very small number of you said you had problems at school because of some immature behaviour in some lessons from some pupils.

In order to help you to do even better and to improve the school further, I have asked the school's leaders, teachers and governors to:

- make sure teaching is at least good in all lessons
- make sure that the tasks you are given are always matched to what you can do
- cut down on the time teachers take to explain things to the whole class in some lessons and so giving you more time to do your own work
- improve writing across the school.

I am sure you will all want to help make your school even better by continuing to work hard and playing together well.

Yours sincerely

Frank Cain
Lead inspector

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