

Birkby Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107601
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	336917
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Ali Stopher
Headteacher	Mrs Diana Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and observed 11 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's updated self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, internal and external monitoring of the school and 36 returned questionnaires from parents and carers, and 33 from staff.

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

- Achievement and attainment at Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The quality of teaching in engaging and challenging pupils.

Information about the school

This is a large school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic heritages and a large number of pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. A significant number of pupils transfer to other schools at the end of the Reception Year. The school has gained National Healthy School Status, Artsmark Gold, Investors in People award, Investors in Pupils award and the local authority Gold Inclusion award.

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 and pupils, parents and carers are overwhelmingly proud of it. Outstanding links with the local and wider community enrich pupils' excellent cultural development and understanding and very effective partnerships enhance pupils' achievement and enjoyment. Community cohesion is an outstanding feature of the school's character both in the local community and internationally. Unsurprisingly, the school is held in high regard locally and by the many international charities who are recipients of pupils' generous fund-raising.

These features are central to the school's character and reflect the outstanding care and support that is provided for each pupil. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and are eager to get to the many sports activities available to them. The Early Years Foundation Stage is good: children are cared for very well and make good progress. Parents and carers of children across all ages comment, 'I have full support from the school at all times,' and, 'I am very impressed with the wide variety of educational experience on offer to the children.'

The quality of teaching is predominantly good and some is outstanding. Pupils are keen to learn and become engrossed when they are challenged and stimulated. On the whole, pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress. However, some of the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to reach the highest levels of work. On occasions, especially in mathematics, some pupils are not always clear about what it is being asked of them because work is not always precisely matched to their interests and abilities. Although pupils' attainment has been low, it has been steadily improving and is currently broadly average because of a strong focus on the teaching of English and a more creative curriculum.

Leaders and governors understand the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the school and self-evaluation is largely accurate. Leaders acknowledge the need to sharpen the school's self-evaluation processes further in order to provide a precise picture of the school's performance. They recognise that this will help them to focus and target areas for improvement precisely. Nevertheless, the school has acted effectively on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and current pupils' work demonstrates continuing improvement. This is most evident in pupils' writing and in the work of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. These developments and strong leadership and management, demonstrate the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in mathematics and for more able pupils, by ensuring that work set always closely matches pupils' interests and abilities and provides sufficient challenge.
 - Target areas for improvement more precisely by sharpening the school's self-evaluation procedures so that they provide leaders and managers with a clearer picture of the school's performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well from well-below-average starting points in Year 1, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. Many of the more able children leave school at the end of the Reception Year and, consequently, this leads to a variation of overall attainment at the end of Reception and start of Year 1. The number of pupils who are at an early stage of speaking English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities rises dramatically in Year 1.

Pupils enjoy learning most when they are challenged by interesting and thought-provoking work. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils used bars of chocolate to help them estimate the multiplication of rows and then refine their estimates as the chocolate is slowly unwrapped. The teacher used a puppet effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and engagement especially when it counted in sets of twos, fives and tens. Pupils' attainment has been low, but is improving and is now broadly average. It is stronger in the areas that have been a school focus such as writing and listening skills. More recent priorities for mathematics and speaking skills are beginning to improve attainment. The school has accurately identified the need to improve the attainment for its more able pupils. Pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and those who are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language are rapidly identified and provided with carefully-focused support, especially in well-planned and taught small group work. Consequently, they make good and sometimes, outstanding progress.

Pupils feel safe and secure. They are very polite and courteous because they are cared for and respected as individuals. They welcome opportunities to take on responsibility and take great pride, for instance, in their roles as play leaders, fruit and eco recycling monitors. Their tree of 'hopes and dreams for the future' reflects their concerns for the wider world. They behave well and are proud to follow the 'Rainbow Rules'. Good systems to improve attendance have been effective and pupils' attendance is now average. Nevertheless, there are still too many pupils who take breaks from their education in term time. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good overall. They are thoughtful and understanding because they are taught to value themselves and others. Good systems to welcome pupils into school and prepare them for the next school are reassuring and their social skills are well developed. Their standards in basic skills and average attendance prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

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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	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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The mostly enjoyable and well-planned lessons provide a good range of activities which engage pupils' interests. For instance, Year 2 pupils relished the rapid pace and the many opportunities to give their opinions in their work on fractions. They rose to the occasion when their teacher said, 'This is the tricky bit we are learning today', and redoubled their efforts to succeed. Teachers have welcomed the school priority to improve assessment. As a result, pupils generally understand how well they are doing in their work, as well as what they need to do in order to move forward in their learning. Teaching is not as effective, especially in mathematics, when lesson planning is not closely matched to the needs and interests of each pupil and they do not always understand exactly what is required of them. Positive relationships and pupils' good attitudes to learning typify the vast majority of lessons. A range of teaching skills, group work and one-to-one attention by effective teaching assistants, supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of speaking English, and helps them to learn well.

The curriculum is well planned and more enjoyable because it is starting to be planned

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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around topics. The creative arts build on pupils' experiences, for example, in looking after their pets, managing money and in topical issues such as the World Cup. Good-quality art work is produced by pupils and their parents and carers after working regularly with professional artists. Consequently, pupils are more inspired, motivated and interested. Pupils are also learning more because they make effective links between, for example, art, history and English. Innovative planning enhances pupils' understanding and enjoyment, for instance, when learning about number through studying oceans, seas, fairytales and castles. Many after-school activities are available covering a wide variety of sporting and artistic interests. Parents and carers also attend many of these and particularly relish the sewing group. Displays of their needlework in school are stimulating and attractive and build parents' and carers' involvement and self-esteem as well as pupils' pride in their parents' and carers' accomplishments. Each pupil is valued and known individually. This is a central principle of the school. Pupils are welcomed into school and are very well prepared for school life. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of speaking English are exceptionally well cared for because of well-tailored support and encouragement; they develop their confidence and skills through the individual support that is provided. The school works exceptionally effectively with outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists and physiotherapists, to meet the needs of individuals.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and governors are single minded in their commitment to improve outcomes for pupils. All staff share this vision because of leaders' determination to involve them in the drive to improve the school's performance. Work is generally well adapted to meet pupils' requirements and, overall, pupils meet, and sometimes exceed, their challenging targets. Parents and carers are very supportive and involved in the school's work and they are increasingly involved in their child's learning.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are effective and that good practice is in place across all areas of its work. Although the governing body is not working at full capacity, a nucleus of governors provides strong support and helps shape the direction of the school. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies such as educational welfare officers, the local pyramid of schools and the local authority, lead to

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a strong focus on pupils' personal and academic development. The school's work to promote community cohesion is outstanding and impacts effectively on pupils' learning and development. Equality of opportunity for all and tackling discrimination are central to the school's character and overall they are promoted well.

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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the nursery with skills that are variable but which are mostly well below those typical for their age. Some aspects of their language, communication and number skills are particularly weak. By the end of the Reception Year their skills are below those expected for their age. At this stage, a significant proportion of the more able children leave the setting to start Year 1 at different schools. Children happily settle into school routines because the systems to welcome them into this friendly and caring environment are good. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning, especially in linking sounds and letters. This is because teaching is good and children enjoy activities, particularly indoors, that engage their interest and encourage them to explore for themselves. They also delight in going on interesting visits within the local community, especially to a local farm. Nevertheless, more limited use of the outdoor space reduces opportunities to develop children's physical, social and personal skills and extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Relationships are good and children are safe and well cared for in this secure and welcoming environment. All welfare procedures are in place and meet current requirements. Leadership and management are good. Staff work well as a team and have established good links with parents and carers who speak positively about the setting. They are becoming increasingly involved in supporting their

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child's learning both at school and at home.

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

Although the number of completed questionnaires was low when compared with the size of the school, all parents and carers who responded were happy with the school's provision and indicated that their children enjoyed school. All parents and carers also agreed that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle and inspectors agree that this aspect is extremely positive. The school is working hard to involve parents and carers more in their child's learning and progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Birkby Infant and Nursery 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	74	11	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	36	26	62	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	40	25	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	64	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	60	17	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	62	16	38	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)	23	55	16	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	43	23	55	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	45	22	52	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	45	20	48	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	50	19	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	60	17	40	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.



16 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Birkby Infant and Nursery School, Huddersfield, HD1 5HQ

It was a pleasure to visit your school. The inspection team thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and listened carefully to what you had to say. Thank you for welcoming us so happily and a special thanks to the pupils who showed inspectors round the school so politely and informatively. You told us how much you enjoy school life and your contribution to the school and local community is excellent. Congratulations to each one of you! Yours is a good school. All of you are very involved in school life and well done for being so fit and healthy.

You help and care for each other well. Younger children settle down well in the Nursery and Reception classes and you make sure that older pupils look after the younger ones. You are very helpful and kind in school and in the local area through your eco work as well as your gardening! You are well cared for and feel safe in school. You are keen to learn and this helps you to achieve well.

We have asked your school to plan your lessons even more carefully so that each one of you can improve your work. We want your work to get better, especially in mathematics and for those of you who learn more quickly. We have also asked your school to be clearer about what needs to be improved to help you even more in your work. Your headteacher and all the staff are working hard to make your school even better.

I wish you every success for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marie Cordey

Lead inspector

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