

Birkby Infant and Nursery School

Blacker Road, Birkby, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD1 5HQ

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress across the school from their individual starting points. Pupils of all ages achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well, know how to keep themselves safe, and are polite and friendly to others.
- Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are extremely well supported and cared for, so that they make the same good progress as their peers.
- The quality of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers work hard to plan activities that will enthuse and motivate pupils.
- All school leaders are passionate in ensuring that pupils make as much progress as they are able. The recently extended leadership team provides good leadership. As a result, the school continues to improve.
- Governance is good and provides effective support and challenge to the school to improve further. Several governors are regular visitors to the school and so gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and how well pupils achieve.
- The school has done much work to improve attendance, which is now broadly average.
- The school provides a warm, welcoming environment for its pupils. Parents say unanimously that their children are happy and feel safe in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and a small proportion requires improvement to be securely good.
- Teachers do not always ask challenging enough questions to promote pupils' thinking further or keep a close enough check on pupils' progress in lessons in order to adapt activities to meet pupils' emerging needs.
- Leaders observe lessons regularly. However, they do not always focus on how well pupils are learning, rather than on how well teachers are teaching.
- Written feedback, after checking lessons, identifies strengths, but areas needing development are not always given to teachers. As a result, teachers are not always sure of what aspects of their teaching will be observed in future.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or part-lessons, taught by 20 teachers. In addition, they conducted visits to classes to check the quality of the curriculum and to observe small groups of pupils being taught by teaching assistants. Three lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read from two different year groups and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and subject leaders, and the coordinator of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They also met with the coordinator of the Early Years Foundation Stage, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), conversations with parents and the school's own records of parents' views.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding policies, school development plans, the school's records of checks on the quality of teaching and samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Julie Webster	Additional Inspector
Tony Price	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (the pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is slightly above average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with the vast majority speaking English as an additional language. This is a much higher proportion than average.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils and has received a gold award for Environmental Health.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that it is consistently good and more is outstanding, in order to increase the rate of pupils' progress further by:
 - ensuring teachers ask more challenging questions to enable pupils to think more deeply about their learning
 - ensuring that teachers systematically check all pupils' understanding of their work in lessons and take the time to check on their progress, in order to adapt tasks when necessary, so that all learn exceptionally well in lessons.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring lesson observations have a sharp focus on the impact that teaching is having on pupils' learning
 - providing consistent written feedback on lesson observations of teachers, clearly identifying areas for development that will form the basis of further observations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those seen nationally. Good teaching, an appropriate focus on speaking and listening activities, and effective bilingual support ensure children make increasingly good progress. The majority leave Reception with skills that are now closer to average.
- Mobility in the school is high: many pupils join the school throughout Years 1 and 2 with little or no English. This has led to standards by the end of Key Stage 1, although steadily improving, being below average over the last two years. However, the school tracks the progress of all its pupils rigorously and can demonstrate that those who have remained in the school since Nursery attain standards that are at least in line with national averages. Pupils who join the school at other times make expected and often better progress over their time in school, despite not reaching expected levels by the end of Year 2.
- Strategies implemented over the last two years in the teaching of reading and phonics (the teaching of letters and the sounds they make) are steadily improving pupils' reading and writing skills. This, combined with a new style of teaching mathematics whereby pupils are placed in small groups for intensive help, means that current standards in the school in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with national expectations and progress for the majority of pupils is accelerating.
- Pupils' reading skills are promoted effectively. There is a strong emphasis on developing their ability to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read unfamiliar words. One charming example of this was in Reception, where one child played the teacher and another read to her. When meeting an unfamiliar word the 'teacher' said, 'Don't forget your blends!' Pupils have the opportunity to read to adults both at school and at home, and parents and other volunteers support them well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are particularly well supported by talented teachers and support assistants. As a result, they become confident learners and achieve as well as their classmates.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to ensure individuals who are entitled to the funding get appropriate support. For example, the school has employed additional bilingual staff and teaching assistants, resources to support their learning and activities which enrich their life experiences. This ensures that these pupils achieve in line with national expectations and closer to their peers than is typical. Given their often well below average starting points, this represents good progress. This clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities for all its pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is usually good, with only a small amount of teaching that requires improvement.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is strong. Teachers display good subject knowledge, particularly in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Bookmarks outlining strategies for tackling unfamiliar words in reading, prompts to help less confident learners, particularly in writing and mathematics, and support from teaching assistants are instrumental in ensuring the good achievement made by the majority of pupils.
- In the majority of lessons teachers create positive working environments, and relationships between adults and pupils are strong. This ensures pupils feel secure in their learning.
- In the best lessons teachers' introductions are kept to a minimum and pupils have time to work independently and think for themselves. As a result, pupils work hard and really enjoy their lessons. Teaching assistants are used effectively throughout lessons, supporting individuals and small groups of pupils.

- Teachers' planning ensures that activities are chosen to engage and enthuse the vast majority of learners. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were particularly engrossed in the drama element, demonstrating high levels of active learning, enjoyment and confidence in expressing themselves freely.
- In many lessons teachers take time to check on pupils' understanding of their learning, supporting where necessary. This ensures pupils do as well as they can. Regular opportunities are given to pupils to talk about their learning with each other and to share opinions. This was particularly so in a challenging lesson where pupils were keen to participate in 'Conscience Alley', a discussion of why or why not a character should pay a visit to the chocolate factory. This was linked to the book 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' that the pupils were reading.
- In the weaker lessons teachers do not always make sure pupils know what to do when beginning to work independently. During the lesson teachers do not always ask questions that will make pupils think deeply about what they are learning. Teachers do not check on how well pupils are progressing often enough. As a result, opportunities to adapt the tasks to pupils' changing needs are missed and pupils continue with work that is sometimes too easy.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around the school and they show respect and consideration towards adults and each other.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are generally interested and motivated in their lessons. They are keen to discuss their work with adults and show pride in what they have achieved.
- Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is supported well. Opportunities are promoted for pupils to work together and discuss their work, which they do happily.
- Pupils work diligently and with interest. They generally behave well in lessons; however, occasionally they become a little distracted when lessons do not completely capture their interest or where work is too easy.
- The school places a strong emphasis on attendance. The school provides a breakfast club which is open to all, but particularly to those who find attendance and punctuality difficult. Letters home, newsletters and meetings are constant reminders to parents about the importance of good attendance, so that pupils do not miss important aspects of their work. In this way, absence has been reduced dramatically.
- The results of the school's own parent questionnaire and the small number of responses to the online questionnaire show that parents feel that their children are happy, well cared for and safe in school. Pupils themselves say they feel safe, including on the internet, and they have a good understanding of how they can keep themselves safe through regular talks from the police and fire service.
- Pupils liken bullying to unkindness and name-calling. Nevertheless, they say that bullying is extremely rare and, if it happens, it is dealt with quickly. Relationships with adults are excellent and, as a result, pupils are confident that they could talk to any adult in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a strong drive for improvement. Together with the assistance of her extended leadership team she has implemented strategies that have effectively accelerated pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a consequence, standards are rising.
- Staff work well as a team and are committed to providing the best opportunities for their pupils. The school provides a warm and welcoming community where all are equally valued.
- School leaders and governors are proud of their school and have a clear view of the school's

strengths and how it can be improved further. The school's systems for tracking the progress of all its pupils are rigorous and thorough.

- Leaders regularly monitor the effectiveness of teaching. However, a few inconsistencies still remain in the quality of teaching. When lessons are observed leaders do not always focus on the difference that teaching is making to pupils' learning. Also, systems for giving feedback to teachers vary. Strengths and areas to develop in their teaching are not always clearly detailed in formal, written feedback. Consequently, teachers and observers are not always clear on what aspects of teaching will be monitored in the next observation.
- Understandably, a high priority is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the whole school and an emphasis on speaking and listening activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children quickly become confident learners. The many pupils who join the school in Years 1 and 2 are also supported well by capable bilingual and support staff, so that they are able to access their lessons seamlessly. Pupils enjoy learning through topics, trips and visitors that have strong links to pupils' interests but support pupils' basic skills effectively. A wide range of after-school clubs are available, each chosen to support learning in a 'fun' way.
- Parents are appreciative of the many ways in which the school supports them in helping their child to learn. Workshops are available for parents and weekly 'what we are learning this week' meetings are held for each of the key stages. Booklets are produced and given to parents to help them in supporting their child's learning at home.
- The local authority understands the school's needs and routinely visits the school. Its input in supporting the school is minimal, since it has confidence in the school's leaders to bring about any improvements necessary.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school has dedicated governors who both challenge and support it in a quest for excellence. They speak confidently about the strengths of the school and how it can improve, their pride in the school's work with parents and its standing in the local community, as well as the happy and harmonious setting it provides for its pupils.
 - They talk knowledgeably about the progress of all pupils, particularly those in receipt of the pupil premium, and the actions taken to bring about this progress.
 - They are well informed and are regular visitors to the school, whether to accompany pupils on school visits or to work alongside them in the classrooms. They meet regularly with leaders of the school and conduct health and safety walks around the school.
 - Governors are aware of the effectiveness of the leadership of teaching. The performance management body is involved in the monitoring of the headteacher's work and, as a result, that of the other teachers, since all share the school's targets for improvement. This ensures they are all closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' pay and performance in the school.
 - Governors keep a close eye on the school's finances and, through prudent spending, ensure the school has sufficient resources and staff to meet pupils' varying needs and enhance their learning.
 - The safety of its pupils is of paramount importance to the governing body and it ensures that systems are robust and that safeguarding meets requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	107601
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	412660

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	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ali Stopher
Headteacher	Diana Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2010
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