

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Birkby Infant and Nursery School

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

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2025

Outcome

Birkby Infant and Nursery School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve well at Birkby Infant and Nursery School. Many children join the school in the Nursery class, but a significant amount also join in other year groups. Whenever pupils join, they are given a warm welcome and quickly assessed to see what they can and cannot do. Children quickly grasp the important English and mathematics skills that they need.

The school has very high expectations of what pupils can do. For example, children in Reception learn how to pin on badges and are then expected to do this every day. Pupils are encouraged to work independently. They also work well in groups and use equipment successfully. Pupils focus on producing high-quality work because they want to do their best.

Children in the early years quickly learn routines. They use their environment remarkably well and practise important skills such as cutting paper and naming items of clothing.

Pupils behave exceptionally well throughout the day. They have strong relationships with staff, and this helps them to feel safe. Children in Nursery learn important personal skills, such as how to communicate how they are feeling. They develop this further throughout school so that they can talk with real maturity for their age by Year 2.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school focuses on the important reading and writing knowledge and skills that pupils need. In reading, children in the Nursery learn how to hear sounds in words. Children learn important words from stories so that they can enjoy them with understanding. As children move into the Reception Year, they read more sounds and words. This important grounding in the early years helps pupils to read a variety of books with confidence when they move into key stage 1. If pupils do fall behind or join the school after the Reception Year, they are given the support that they need to quickly catch up. The school's outcomes in phonics in 2024 were below the national average. However, pupils who started the school in Nursery, or at the start of Reception, achieved outcomes above the national average. Where pupils joined in Year 1 or 2, they made rapid progress, but did not all achieve the expected standard, often due to being new to the English language.

Pupils develop strong communication skills. Again, the effective start that children get in the early years helps with this. The school is clear on the important vocabulary that children need to know and use. If any pupils need help to remember or use these words, then teachers pick up on this swiftly. Pupils speak to each other using their 'meet and greet' opportunities in class. Staff listen and watch carefully to check that they are doing this accurately. Staff make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are new to English get lots of practice to do this. Staff assess pupils' needs whenever they enter the school and are quick to spot if pupils have any SEND. The school's consistent approach to improving pupils' language skills helps in other subjects. Pupils can calculate and discuss mathematics accurately. They can talk about a wide range of religions and their beliefs.

Pupils have a deep understanding of mathematical concepts. They build this up over time. Teachers skilfully use equipment to help pupils understand what a half is, or that 20 is double 10.

Teachers have exceptionally strong subject knowledge. They know what the important knowledge that pupils need to remember is. They check on this regularly. Pupils are secure in what they know before they move on to something new. The offer for pupils new to the country who cannot speak English is exemplary. These pupils are assessed in their first week. The school develops a bespoke programme for them. They catch up with other pupils very quickly.

The school celebrates and encourages staff to innovate. The school does this with a clear understanding of what pupils need. Staff work together highly effectively. They appreciate the opportunity to share ideas. This helps to keep their workload manageable while also helping them to improve in their own roles.

The school works very successfully in partnership with parents and carers. Parents come into school to join in with school clubs with their children. Parents of pupils with SEND feel highly included in the decisions that the school makes about their children. The school also works effectively with parents to improve the attendance for pupils. This has improved markedly in recent times.

Governors are highly skilled in their roles. They visit the school regularly to check that what the school is doing is having the intended impact.

The school helps pupils to develop their independence and resilience. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles such as play leaders or pupil leaders. There are also a host of clubs and activities for all pupils to take part in. Pupils are proud of their school and welcome new arrivals with kindness. Pupils also know how to keep themselves safe online and to be kind in the online world as much as in person.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in November 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	107601
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10346184
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	496
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pat Holderness
Headteacher	Diana Wilson
Website	www.birkbyinf.com
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision for any pupils.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and special educational needs coordinator about progress since the last inspection. He also spoke with members of the governing body and a representative from Kirklees local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning in lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector spoke to parents and reviewed the answers that they gave on the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also reviewed responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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