

Tudor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	117109
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	379352
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Marion Wallace

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alex Mitchell
Headteacher	Michelle Pearson
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
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Age group	4-11
Inspection date(s)	2–3 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Marion Wallace

Additional inspector

John Sangster

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 11 teachers in 17 lessons and held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at improvement plans for the school and for subjects, the governing body minutes, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, they carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work, listened to readers and analysed 77 questionnaires received from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Tudor Primary School is smaller than the average sized primary school. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average and a small minority of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average, but the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. Their needs relate mainly to learning difficulties, with some emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in a Nursery class and two Reception classes. The rising birth rate locally means that numbers in the Early Years Foundation Stage are increasing but there are small cohort numbers in Key Stage 2. In 2011 the floor standards, the minimum expectations for attainment and progress set by the government, were met in mathematics but not in English. There is a pre-school class held on the school site; this provision is not managed by the school's governing body and was not inspected by the team.

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	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Tudor Primary is a good school. Parents and carers appreciate the good community ethos, high levels of care and the exciting learning opportunities that the school offers.
- Pupils achieve well in their academic development and extremely well in their personal development. Progress is good but the standards pupils reach in writing are not as high as those in reading and mathematics. The progress of new arrivals and some minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- Good teaching enables pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and from a range of backgrounds, to make good progress in all aspects as they move through the school. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to ensure pupils, especially the more able, fully extend their writing skills.
- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is exemplary because the school ethos is extremely supportive. Pupils make superb gains in their personal development and consequently they feel extremely safe in school.
- There is high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school works well with a wide range of external partners to help all pupils and consequently they gain confidence and are enthusiastic learners who have a mature attitude to their work. Pupils who enter school at different points and who speak little English are extremely well supported and they make very good progress.
- The curriculum provides memorable experiences and pupils enjoy all aspects, especially mathematics, reading, art and physical education.
- The headteacher, supported by a good senior management team and an active governing body, provides strong leadership and a clear vision for future school improvement.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good but opportunities to develop children’s mark making and early writing skills are less well developed than other areas of learning. The school is making good progress developing the outdoor area for learning and play.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing to the same level as reading and mathematics by:
 - increasing the level of challenge and the expectations for what pupils can achieve, especially more-able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers plan more rigorously and seize every opportunity to extend pupils' writing skills.
- Ensure opportunities to extend mark making and early writing skills are extended in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children join the Nursery class with low level of skills and experiences for their age. A significant number of children enter speaking little or no English. Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good and sometimes outstanding progress throughout the school so that they reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6, with higher attainment in mathematics and reading than in writing. Overall this represents good achievement considering the small cohort numbers. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who join the school later than at the usual times all make good progress, as do pupils who do not speak English as their first language or have little English. Improved provision and targeted support has helped these groups to make rates of progress from their different starting points that are more rapid than other pupils.

Pupils achieve well in reading and reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the expected level at Key Stage 2. Inspectors agree with parents' views that pupils make good progress. Pupils enjoy reading. For example in Year 1, where they are challenged well in phonics lessons, they took pleasure in learning the sounds that letters make. Year 2 pupils talked about their favourite books and all groups of pupils enjoyed following this up with writing about 'Billy Goats Gruff'; pupils used lively language such as, 'Do not cross that bridge!' Pupils take a pride in their work, which is neatly presented, but handwriting skills are variable. On occasion opportunities are missed to develop extended writing across subjects, especially for more-able pupils.

The school's tracking data and the inspection evidence indicate all pupils are now on course to reach their challenging targets for literacy and numeracy, and they know them well. Pupils work well with a partner and in small groups and they have a good work ethic. They really enjoy learning because lessons are generally well planned and teachers create an exciting climate for learning.

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Quality of teaching

Teaching in the large majority of lessons observed during the inspection was good and a in a few was outstanding. This picture reflects the views of the vast majority of parents. Good teaching was observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with children having opportunities to learn through activities led by adults and those they choose for themselves. An example of outstanding teaching was seen in a Year 5 English lesson where pupils were totally absorbed by the Siege of Troy and showed high levels of concentration and enthusiasm for their task. The teacher challenged pupils to consider their use of vocabulary and how chronological connectives could be used to enhance the impact of their writing. Their awareness of each other and genuine desire to help each other confirmed extremely strong social and moral development. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading and consequently all pupils are positive about reading and they can explain how to tackle difficult words. The teaching of mathematics is consistently good. For example, Year 6 pupils made excellent progress in converting fractions to decimals because of the rigorous pace and challenge from the teacher.

Teachers use assessment information well to plan interesting curriculum work. They use questions effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding, and give them well-planned opportunities to discuss their ideas with a partner. Marking gives pupils a clear idea of how to improve their work and older pupils respond individually to their teacher's comments and challenges, showing their understanding of what they need to do to improve. Pupils with additional needs are very well supported by teaching assistants in class and small groups so they make good progress. The pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress because they are well supported by the school and support services.

Teachers encourage writing for different purposes but opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge more able pupils to write at length.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Excellent relationships are evident and consequently behaviour is exemplary throughout the school in lessons and at break times. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn to behave extremely well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils and staff show high levels of respect for each other and for visitors to the school. Pupils are extremely polite, for example asking visitors at lunch time if they would like a drink of water when they were getting one for themselves. Almost all parents and carers who replied to the inspection questionnaire or who talked to inspectors felt that their child is safe in the school and most that behaviour is good or better. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire and those who talked to inspectors said that they felt very, very safe in school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage care and welfare are exemplary and this contributes to a very positive start. Year 1 pupils showed excellent awareness of safety: they designed their own signs warning children 'not to enter the park in the dark'; the reflective arm bands they

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had made were impressive and enriched their presentation, 'wearing appropriate clothes that can be seen at night'. All pupils showed excellent awareness of road safety. Older pupils talked knowledgeably about safe use of the internet and they were aware of different types of bullying and dangers of drugs and alcohol. Pupils say they can discuss any problems they have with adults. They take responsibility seriously and older pupils look after younger pupils in assembly and break times.

Evidence confirms that behaviour and awareness of safety have been consistently excellent over time, reflecting school ethos and procedures. Pupils know the difference between falling out and bullying and they have confidence in the adults that any issues will be dealt with. Exemplary behaviour contributes to good achievement. Attitudes and enthusiasm for learning are consistently strong and have a positive impact on learning. Case studies show clearly how well the school deals with any pupils who have behavioural problems. Attendance over time is average but current attendance levels show a rising trend to above average because strategies to improve attendance are extremely effective. Attendance for older pupils is noticeably higher than for younger pupils. Most pupils are punctual for the vast majority of the time.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's skilful management and excellent leadership have permeated the school and is one of the main reasons that pupils' achievement over time has been good. All senior and middle leaders communicate drive and ambition very effectively and they have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. All staff are committed to providing each pupil with the best possible education. Equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination are pursued effectively. A continual drive for improvement is underpinned by effective systems for evaluating the strengths and further areas for development of the school. The school's good organisation, strong, shared vision and consistently good performance over time underpin its good capacity to improve.

Rigorous leadership and management of teaching have ensured that the large majority of teaching is good or better. There is a strong sense of purpose and desire to overcome any difficulties. All staff are keen to go the 'extra mile', and the school deploys its resources well, particularly to provide extra support and intervention for pupils and families who may face significant difficulties and barriers to learning. The school's evaluation of its own performance is rigorous. Tracking of progress over time is thorough, and senior leaders quickly identify any dips and develop sensible strategies and interventions to promote improvement. Appropriate developmental areas to improve further the effectiveness of the school are clearly identified in the school improvement plan. Good progress has already been made raising standards in writing. The governing body ably supports staff and challenges the school well to ensure school improvement initiatives are successful. The governing body monitors and evaluates the work of the school effectively and is well organised.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, with excellent induction

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arrangements and good links with parents. The school is making good progress developing the outdoor learning environment.

The curriculum is good and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Together they provide pupils with rich and memorable experiences. Links between subjects are planned carefully and pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy and information communication technology skills in other subject areas. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their topic work.

All safeguarding procedures and checks on adults meet statutory requirements and the governing body monitors the site and procedures rigorously. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements.

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tudor Primary School, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9ER

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember your extremely polite, considerate and exemplary behaviour. You all enjoyed the Early Years Foundation Stage assembly and we noticed how you all appreciated the singing. You and your parents and carers told us that Tudor Primary is a good school, and we agree. These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress through the school because teaching is good.
- You all enjoy learning and your teachers give you interesting things to do.
- Your attendance has improved a lot this year.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are sensible and know how to keep safe.
- Your school cares for you and your families extremely well and teaches you a lot about how to care for others.
- There are good opportunities for you to take on responsibilities, help others and contribute to helping your school improve even more.
- Those of you who join the school other than at the usual time, or who speak very little or no English, settle in very well and make good progress.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and governing body lead the school well. All the staff work effectively together as a team to make sure that Tudor is an extremely safe and secure, fun place to learn.

There are two things we have identified for staff and the governing body to improve.

- Ensure that you reach the same standards in writing as you do in reading and mathematics.
- Make sure that you have as many opportunities as possible to develop your mark making and early writing skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future. You can all help by continuing to work really hard.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace
Lead inspector

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