

Town Farm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125126
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359840
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Robin Gaff

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	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gerry Place
Headteacher	Jill Koops
Date of previous school inspection	10 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, observing at least once all 15 teachers present in the school during the inspection. Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, members of the governing body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at planning and evaluation documents. They scrutinised the school's own analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. A total of 145 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed, as were questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which the school has succeeded in improving the achievement of specific groups, such as those who are learning English as an additional language.
- The success of the school's strategies for improving attendance and reducing the proportion of persistent absentees.
- The impact of the school's focus on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching, in terms of improving pupils' learning and progress.
- The extent to which the school is meeting all requirements with regard to promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

Information about the school

Town Farm is larger than the average-sized primary school and includes a Nursery currently attended, on a part-time basis, by 74 children. The proportion of pupils in the school from minority ethnic groups is just above the national average. The main groups represented are White British, and Asian and Asian British - Indian. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than that found nationally. An above-average proportion of pupils, including those who have a statement, have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These cover a wide range of additional needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above average. The proportion of pupils who join the school at other than the normal time for transfer is above average. Before- and after-school clubs, run by outside organisations, operate on the school premises. A children's centre, managed by the local authority, opened on an adjacent site in 2010. These facilities are subject to separate inspection arrangements.

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

Town Farm is a good school where every pupil is known well and is treated as a valued individual. It is a harmonious community in which pupils from different backgrounds relate very well to one another. The school provides a safe, stimulating and supportive environment, which enables pupils to achieve and behave well, to develop in maturity and self-confidence. One parent, whose comments were typical, said, 'I am very happy I sent my son to this particular school. With the ongoing support and understanding of his teachers, he has really come out of his shell in a positive way.' Pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school has improved substantially, so that it is now consistently in line with national averages. Pupils, including those who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress because of the effective teaching and the well-targeted support they receive. Pupils are helpful and considerate to one another. They are increasingly articulate as they move up the school, and are keen to learn. Many pupils in the upper part of the school take on positions of responsibility, but opportunities for younger pupils to do so are more limited. Pupils' attendance, although low in terms of that found nationally, is improving rapidly because the school has substantially reduced the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. It has not yet, however, succeeded in persuading all parents and carers of the importance of ensuring that their children attend as regularly as they should. ♦♦

Teaching is effective and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of work and behaviour. They work well together to plan interesting activities which provide a good match to pupils' different levels of ability and interests. In a few lessons, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities for hands-on, independent learning. Teachers, as well as senior leaders, monitor pupils' progress very carefully in order to ensure that pupils receive additional support when they need it. The school is developing its curriculum in imaginative ways, which have not yet had time to have their full impact on pupils' achievement. Their learning and development are enhanced by teachers' extensive and imaginative use of up-to-date ICT facilities, as well as by a good range of enrichment activities. Pupils, including those who join at other than the normal time for transfer, settle in quickly when they start school. Potentially vulnerable pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive outstanding support. This helps many of them to overcome significant barriers to their learning and to make progress on a par with their peers.

The headteacher, ably supported by her senior colleagues, has continued to focus relentlessly on improving outcomes for pupils, particularly by setting challenging targets for attainment and progress. She has made good use of available resources in improving the quality of the school environment, especially the outdoor area. Middle leaders play a positive role in monitoring the quality of teaching and in ensuring that it is consistently

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effective. The governing body knows the school well and is prepared to challenge as well as to support school leaders. Self-evaluation is accurate, and is now being used well to inform development planning. These factors, together with the way the school has successfully addressed weaknesses identified by its last inspection, indicate its good capacity for further improvement. ◆◆◆◆◆

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the level of pupils' attendance to at least the national average by 2012, by introducing a wider range of measures to ensure that all parents and carers appreciate the importance of avoiding unnecessary absence.
- Raise pupils' levels of attainment so that they are consistently above current national averages by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities for independent learning
 - ensuring that all teachers give pupils sufficiently detailed written advice so that they know the next steps to take to improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities for younger pupils to take on responsibility within the school community.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment, as represented by their results in 2010 in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, was above the national average in both English and mathematics. This represents good progress from their below-average starting points when they join the school. The school's accurate assessment of current Year 6 pupils' attainment and progress, confirmed by inspectors' observations, indicates that the improving trend in pupils' achievement is being maintained. Pupils' good behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning and progress. They are attentive to and willing to learn from one another in class. Pupils cooperate well in pair and group activities. They enjoy completing practical tasks, for example when they learn about measuring space in mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities play a full part in lessons, owing to the sensitive and well-planned support they receive from teaching assistants. ◆

Pupils behave safely and sensibly around the school. They feel safe in school because they know who to approach if they are worried, for example about bullying, and they say that adults deal firmly and fairly with the rare bullying incidents that occur. Pupils show a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of a balanced diet. Many of them take part in after-school sport and other physical activities, such as the gymnastics club and netball team. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community, for example as play leaders or school council members, and by raising money for local, national and international charities which pupils choose themselves. They enjoy learning about and value others' beliefs and traditions, and they respectfully observe opportunities for prayer or reflection in assemblies. Pupils' grasp of basic skills indicates that their preparation for the next stage of their education is at least sound. However, for a small, albeit diminishing, minority of pupils, this is limited by their poor attendance and punctuality.

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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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers include a range of activities in their lessons to ensure that they are well suited to the needs of different groups and individuals, and provide appropriate challenge. Teachers make good use of ICT facilities, such as interactive whiteboards, to engage and interest pupils, and to enhance the pace of learning. In an outstanding English lesson, the teacher enabled pupils to use digital recording equipment to extremely good effect. They gained an excellent knowledge of specific vocabulary and of how to compile and present evidence as they played the role of detectives sent to investigate the alleged crimes committed by Goldilocks in the Three Bears' house. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is too slow, for example when teachers spend too long explaining to pupils what they are going to learn and how, rather than enabling them to learn for themselves. Teachers use questioning well to check and to develop pupils' understanding. They mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, but their written comments do not always include sufficiently detailed advice on what pupils need to do next to improve their work.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is well tailored to meet pupils' needs, and enables them to develop their communication, creative and other skills, often by linking different subject areas. For example, Year 5 pupils enjoyed learning about ancient Greece by taking part in 'mini-Olympics', writing about the events and also creating friezes and pottery based on them. This is also an example of the effective

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partnerships the school has established, since the activity was organised in collaboration with art and sports teachers from local specialist secondary schools. The school has also adopted an increasingly successful approach to teaching reading and writing. Pupils follow an innovative programme in which they are grouped according to their skill levels, rather than their age. This enables them to make good progress at an appropriate pace.

School staff work with a wide variety of outside agencies to enable pupils, especially those who have additional needs, to receive expert care and support. Transitions to, from and within the school are well managed. The school has established effective systems for promoting good behaviour, which pupils understand and support, with the result that exclusions are very rare. The school works well with parents and carers, including those whose circumstances have made them hard to reach, and ensures that they are well informed about their children's progress. The school has implemented a range of measures, such as weekly awards, to foster pupils' understanding of the importance of regular attendance. Leaders recognise the need to work more effectively, for example by enlisting the support of outside agencies, to ensure that this understanding is shared by all parents and carers.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels, and the staff as a whole, strongly support the headteacher in her drive to improve pupils' achievement. Middle leaders, several of whom are new to their posts, exercise their responsibilities effectively, and provide good role models as teachers. Together with the senior team, they closely monitor the quality of teaching, and provide coaching and support where it is needed. Pupils, parents and carers know that they can approach the headteacher, as well as class teachers and other adults, for guidance and support. Members of the governing body bring enthusiasm, experience and expertise to their role and are well aware of the challenges facing the school. They show a good understanding of their responsibilities, for example with regard to promoting community cohesion, and have helped to establish positive links with local organisations, including the new children's centre. The school promotes equality of opportunity well, in that it enables pupils with different abilities and from a range of backgrounds to achieve well. Racist behaviour is extremely rare, and is dealt with very firmly when it occurs. The school meets all requirements with regard to the promotion of community cohesion. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about the different cultures and traditions represented in this country, for example by celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year. They do not currently benefit from direct links with schools elsewhere in the United Kingdom or the wider world. The school has good arrangements for safeguarding children, including

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comprehensive child protection policies and procedures, and robust systems for vetting staff appointments. The quality of outcomes for pupils, as well as leaders' prudent management of resources, indicate that the school achieves good value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's attainment by the time they complete the Early Years Foundation Stage is broadly in line with age-related expectations. This indicates that they make good progress from their starting points, which are below those found nationally when they join the Nursery or Reception class, particularly with regard to communication skills. Children develop good social skills and enjoy playing and learning together. They talk confidently with adults, for example when describing their paintings and drawings to visitors, or proudly showing how well they are learning to count. Adults provide a very safe environment and take good care of the children. They know them well because they liaise closely with parents and carers, and closely observe children's learning and development. This enables them to provide children with activities which match their needs. Children make good progress in matching letters to sounds in well-planned sessions which enable them to develop their reading skills. However, on occasion, staff give children too few opportunities to develop and consolidate their learning through practical, self-chosen activities. Leaders show a good understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, and have successfully developed the provision, particularly the well-resourced, stimulating facilities for outdoor play. They do not always use the results of assessments to identify any patterns of potential underachievement.

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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

Inspectors' judgements support the views of parents and carers. A very large majority of those who responded to the questionnaire say their children enjoy school and are happy with their children's experience there. Most believe that it helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle. An overwhelming majority believe that the school keeps their children safe and that it meets their children's particular needs. Most parents and carers agree that teaching is good, and that their children are making sufficient progress and are well prepared for the future. A very large majority of parents and carers believe that the school is well led and managed. Most parents and carers are pleased with the way the school informs them about their children's progress, and believe that the school helps them to support their children's learning. A very small minority do not agree that the school deals effectively with poor behaviour, or that it takes account of their suggestions and concerns. A few parents and carers expressed concern about specific issues, such as the way the school deals with inappropriate behaviour. Inspectors discussed these concerns with school leaders.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Town Farm Primary 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 145 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 437 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	46	76	52	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	77	53	64	44	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	73	50	65	45	6	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	43	72	50	4	3	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	68	47	69	48	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	42	69	48	12	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	44	69	48	7	5	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)	50	34	74	51	7	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	41	72	50	8	6	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	37	71	49	17	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	29	82	57	7	5	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	62	43	74	51	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	49	65	45	4	3	1	1

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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



28 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Town Farm Primary School, Staines TW19 7HU

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you had to say. I am writing to tell you about what we found.

Town Farm is a good school. You say you feel safe there because you know who to go to if you are worried. You know how important it is to have a healthy lifestyle. You are considerate of one another and you behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. You get on well together and you respect and value different cultures. A few of you need to improve your attendance and punctuality. You learn a lot about people's traditions in other parts of this country and the wider world and you raise a lot of money for the charities you choose to support ♦ well done!

You work hard in lessons, and make good progress in reaching the levels expected of you. Teachers give you a good range of things to do in lessons. You enjoy taking part in special events, as well as after-school clubs. Adults look after you well and keep you safe.

The headteacher and all the staff, as well as the governing body, are working hard to make the school even better. To help them do this, we have asked them to do the following things.

- Make sure everyone understands how important it is to attend school regularly.
- Give you more chances to learn for yourselves and from each other in lessons.
- Make sure all the teachers let you know what you have to do next to improve your work.
- Give younger pupils more chances to learn by helping around the school.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

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