

Tacolneston Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121060
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358916
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Colin Henderson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Durrant
Headteacher	Lisa Blowfield
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eight lessons involving four teachers and five teaching assistants. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school improvement and development plan, self-evaluation form, tracking data, minutes of governors' meetings and local authority reports. They also analysed 51 questionnaires from parents and carers, 26 from pupils and three from staff.

Inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- They explored how successful staff are in improving pupils' weaknesses in mathematics.
- They investigated how well the school tracks pupils' progress and how staff use assessments to target areas for improvement and raise attainment.
- They looked at how well subject leaders evaluate standards and focus on raising attainment.
- They investigated how the school has improved the weaknesses in the Early Years Foundation Stage, reported at the last inspection.

Information about the school

This is a small school. Most pupils come from the villages of Tacolneston and Fornsett St Peter and 15% come from outside the immediate area. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national average. A very small proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. An average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and a Food for Life Partnership award. It is part of a collaborative arrangement with Morley Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School; the headteacher divides her time equally between the two schools. The school has had a high level of staff change since the last inspection.

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

Tacolneston has improved significantly since the last inspection and it is a good school. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has been the driving force behind this improvement. She has been supported well by an influential and active governing body. They have used opportunities successfully to bring in some new staff and establish a cohesive team that has improved what the school provides, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has led to higher attainment and pupils make good progress in their learning. It is a friendly, harmonious school where pupils enjoy their learning and respond well in a safe, caring and supportive learning environment. This is valued highly by both pupils and their parents and carers. One parent commented, 'I can't praise the school enough - both my child and I are very happy'. The school focuses strongly on each individual, providing excellent care, guidance and support to ensure that pupils develop both academically and personally. Pupils behave excellently and relationships are very good throughout the school. This is clearly evident in the caring way in which the older pupils take responsibility for ensuring that the young children are happy and settled.

Pupils' achievement is good and attainment has risen, for example in reading and writing, to above average levels. Achievement in mathematics is also improving, although not as quickly as in other areas as weaknesses in pupils' mental mathematical skills make it difficult when they try to solve challenging number problems. Pupils enjoy the interesting range of learning activities and the increasing opportunities to extend their writing and mathematical skills in the different cross-curricular topics. The school carefully tracks the progress of each individual and picks up quickly any pupil who is falling behind. The good use of intervention groups enables these pupils to be put back on track to meet their expected end-of-year target. The effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is particularly successful in identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They make good progress and many attain higher than similar pupils nationally.

Children settle quickly and happily into Kingfisher class. They benefit from the many changes and improvements made, for example to the outdoor provision. Good teaching and a well-organised range of interesting activities help children to make good progress. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school, although it is not consistently good in every class. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. Teachers manage their classes well to ensure that pupils focus on their learning. Most plan lessons carefully, although, in some lessons, the range of activities does not match the different abilities within the class. In these lessons the teacher's expectations are not consistently high enough to ensure that pupils always achieve as well as they could, especially the most able. Teachers use questions effectively to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas. They do not consistently use further challenging questions

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to extend able pupils, for example, when looking at different ways of working out a challenging mathematical problem.

The headteacher has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. She has worked closely with a good and influential governing body to provide a clear and decisive strategy to help the school to progress further. For example, the recent decision to collaborate with another local school is beginning to provide more opportunities for staff and pupils, for example by sharing ideas and practices. Subject leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, are contributing increasingly effectively to raising standards. They are carefully monitoring attainment within their subjects and identifying and supporting practices, for example the use of pupil improvement targets, which contribute well to improving pupils' work. The school has effective procedures to check how well it is doing. It has good capacity to continue to raise standards and sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics across the school by:
 - improving pupils' mental mathematical skills; and
 - applying these skills to solve challenging number problems.
- Improve teaching to at least good in every class by:
 - ensuring that teachers match activities to the full range of learning needs;
 - develop teachers' use of questions to challenge more-able pupils consistently to extend their skills and knowledge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in most lessons because of good teaching, their enthusiastic approach and their excellent behaviour which helps them to listen carefully and concentrate on their work. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils worked really well together in trying to solve a range of number problems. Good guidance helped them to recognise where errors had been made and how to use that knowledge to improve their work. Attainment on entry to Reception Year varies from year-to-year as numbers are small. It broadly meets national expectations. Although attainment varies between the small year groups, it has improved over the last three years to above average levels by Year 6. Good tracking procedures help the staff to check carefully on the progress of each pupil and to see how well they are doing compared to other schools. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and often attain above average levels. They benefit particularly from an early assessment of their specific needs and targeted support from well-trained teaching assistants. The small number of pupils, for whom English is an additional language, also benefit from good individual support and make good progress.

Pupils commented how they really enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is excellent in lessons and throughout the day. Pupils feel safe and adopt healthy lifestyles, for example, through their swimming sessions and the good range of sporting activities provided by the cluster of local schools. Their understanding of the world of work is enhanced well through links with such local companies as Hethel Engineering. The school council organises charity fund-raising events, although their involvement in improving aspects of the

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school's provision is not as well developed. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social and moral aspects are particularly strong and pupils' spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by visits, for example to a synagogue, and by their involvement in such events as the One World Festival.

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	2
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	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

There is some good teaching in each key stage with some elements of outstanding practice, for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers manage their classes well to ensure that pupils stay focused on their learning. Most teachers use interesting resources to capture pupils' attention, for example, when Reception children excitedly looked at a map to help them with ideas for writing stories. Most teachers use assessments well to plan lessons carefully, although learning objectives and the range of activities are not broad enough in some lessons to challenge all pupils, particularly the most able. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that improvement targets and effective marking by the teacher help them to understand what they need to focus on to improve their work. These are helping to raise standards, although they are not embedded consistently in each class.

The curriculum offers a good range of interesting activities and is enhanced well by extra-curricular clubs, visitors and visits, for example to the shrine at Walsingham. It is enriched when the school links with other local schools on joint projects such as multi-skills sports

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events and science days. These also offer opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to extend their skills, for example through master classes.

The outstanding care, guidance and support are key factors in helping pupils enjoy school and encouraging them to try hard. Staff know each individual pupil well and interventions begin early to build confidence. Pupils benefit from very good support in classroom activities and through good quality induction processes when they join the school and when they move to their next school. Older pupils help younger ones to make friends and feel safe. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit particularly from close individual attention and the school's excellent links with external agencies, and 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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher maintains a persistent focus on improving the school. Her influential leadership and good management skills have enabled her to identify the key areas for improvement. She has established a strong working partnership with a good governing body that provides detailed self-evaluation. They use development planning successfully to drive the improvement of key priorities, for example raising pupils' achievement; they carefully analyse assessment data to check that they are on track to achieve school targets. The governors have managed the school's collaboration successfully. The school is already benefiting from the new arrangement, for example through sharing ideas on how to improve key areas.

The school is successful in tackling any discrimination. It promotes equal opportunities well, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although more-able pupils are not always challenged fully in some lessons. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers; this contributes successfully to their children's learning. Safeguarding procedures are good. The headteacher and nominated governors have a very clear understanding that the school meets current requirements and are proactive in ensuring that the school is kept safe and secure. Staff are suitably trained in child protection and there are good systems for recording any concerns. The school is successful in promoting cohesion within the school and local communities, for example, inviting parents, carers and grandparents of Chinese children to share aspects of their lives. Pupils' knowledge of other global communities is enhanced well by their involvement in Africa Week and the One World Festival.

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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 make good progress. The effective use of ongoing assessments and detailed tracking ensure that they meet expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Many attain above expected levels. Under the good leadership of the joint Early Years Foundation Stage leaders, this key stage has improved hugely since the last inspection. Changes to the physical lay-out, particularly to the greatly improved outdoor learning area, are used with great effectiveness to create an exciting and stimulating learning environment. Staff plan carefully to organise a comprehensive programme that captures children's interest in all areas of learning, for example by encouraging children to indicate what they would like to include in their range of activities. The balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities is good. Teaching is good and staff work well together as a team to ensure that all children are settled well and enjoying their learning. Adults provide consistently excellent support to each child and promote their learning successfully, although opportunities to extend language are not always used fully. The use of a detailed 'learning journey' for each child records their achievements and their progress accurately. The good induction process and the friendly, caring atmosphere are valued highly by parents and carers.

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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

A large majority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most were very positive about the school. They particularly value the strong leadership given by the headteacher and the school's friendly, caring, family-like environment, which helps their children to feel safe and enjoy school. A small number of parents and carers are concerned that the school does not keep them well informed about their children's progress and does not help them to support their children's learning. The inspectors judged that the school has a good partnership with parents and carers. It tries hard to keep them informed and to encourage their involvement through the 'Friday Flyer'; the school web-site; termly briefings and open evenings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tacolneston Church of England Primary 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	55	21	41	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	35	69	15	29	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	49	20	39	5	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	59	18	35	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	32	63	16	31	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	59	16	31	3	6	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	53	22	43	2	4	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)	24	47	22	43	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	55	19	37	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	45	26	51	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	35	30	59	1	2	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	25	49	21	41	4	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	65	15	29	3	6	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 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.



30 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tacolneston Church of England Primary, Norwich, NR16 1AL

I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. After talking with you about what you do and hearing your views, looking at your work, watching you learn, and talking to your teachers, we have judged that your school is good.

We were pleased to see how well you get on together and you are proud of your school. As your behaviour is excellent, teachers can get on quickly with the job of helping you learn. You are making good progress in your lessons, particularly in your reading and writing. Your progress in mathematics is not quite as good as many of you find solving problems in your head difficult. We have asked your teachers to help you to improve these skills and use them to solve challenging number problems. In most of your lessons, teachers plan activities that are interesting and you try hard to do what they ask. We have asked them to try to make sure that all lessons contain activities that meet your different learning needs. Your teachers ask questions to encourage you to put forward your ideas in lessons, and we have asked them to make these questions more challenging for those of you who can learn quickly.

It was interesting to talk to some of you about your school and how you enjoy your work, especially the different topics and the good range of visits and visitors. You are keen to improve your achievement. Some Year 6 pupils told us that they work hard to achieve their targets, for example, in numeracy. We would encourage you all to use the help and guidance given by your teachers to improve your work.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector

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