

Tenacres First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116729
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	379288
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Bartleman

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Gorton
Headteacher	Annette Shillaker
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2007
School address	Quibury Close Redditch B98 0PB
Telephone number	01527 528872
Fax number	01527 515277
Email address	office@tenacres.worcs.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited two school assemblies and 21 lessons, observing 11 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 126 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

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

- How effectively does provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage promote good learning and development?
- How well does the quality of teaching and the use of assessment information support and challenge all groups of pupils?
- Are all pupils making sustained progress?
- How effectively are all leaders, including the governing body, driving improvements in teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes?

Information about the school

Tenacres First School is an average-sized first school that admits children from a wide range of pre-school settings. Most pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. There is a before-school club managed by the governing body. A privately run Children's Centre is attached to the school.

The school has achieved the Artsmark Gold award, Silver Eco school status and Healthy Schools status.

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

Tenacres is a good school. The children get off to an exceptional start in the Reception classes. In Years 1 to 4, good teaching overall and a well-focused curriculum ensure that pupils make the most of this accelerated start to their learning, so that attainment throughout the school is above average. All groups of pupils, such as girls and boys, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well. Improvements in provision and initiatives employed by the school have successfully accelerated children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in writing across the school.

Parents and carers are pleased with the education provided for their children and comment that, 'The school is friendly and welcoming and our children are happy and settled.' The school has outstanding links with them and promotes good community cohesion locally and internationally through many neighbourhood events and links overseas. Trusting relationships between pupils and adults reflect the good care, guidance and support provided. As a consequence, pupils feel safe and develop personal skills well, including good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

Behaviour throughout the school is good and well managed. The school has improved attendance so that it is above average and continuing to rise. Pupils have an extremely well-developed understanding of how to stay healthy and are happy to take on responsibilities within their school community. Pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of after-school activities and clubs, including the choir, instrument tuition and 'forest school'. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust.

The large majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good. In some lessons that were satisfactory, activities were not being consistently tailored to individuals' learning needs and limited use was made of assessment. In the outstanding lessons seen, activities were sharply focused on the pupils' next steps in learning and proceeded with pace. Pupils typically learn well and make good progress, focusing on the given tasks and enjoying their activities. The vast majority of pupils know their targets but marking does not always identify what they need to do next to improve their work. In the satisfactory lessons these skills are not so apparent or shared widely enough. The well-planned and developing curriculum provides rich learning experiences for pupils which are greatly enhanced by a range of visits, visitors and strong partnerships with local schools. Staff make sure that all pupils are equally valued and they work hard to promote the learning of boys to help them do as well as the girls. The most able pupils do particularly well and attain high standards by

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the time they leave.

The headteacher provides a very clear sense of purpose and direction, clearly linked to school improvement. She has, rightly, focused on developing a senior leadership team although not all its members are, as yet, as fully involved in the good monitoring and analysis as she is. The Early Years Foundation Stage is an outstanding aspect of the school, particularly in the use of the well-resourced outside area and the child-focused curriculum. The governing body and leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the priorities to be addressed to maintain recent improvements. Based on these good aspects and its good track record of improvement, rising standards and strong leadership, the school has good capacity for sustained further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable all members of the leadership team to use their skills to track, monitor and analyse pupils' progress and provision across the school.
- Raise the level of teaching throughout the school to be consistently good or better by:
 - using assessment information to plan appropriately challenging tasks for all pupils
 - sharing more widely the good practice that exists within the school
 - ensuring that marking always shows pupils how they are able to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment is typically below the levels expected for their age when children enter Reception. The teacher assessments for Year 2 have been significantly above average over the last three years. Lesson observations confirm that a majority of pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age in English and mathematics. Girls have outperformed boys in the past but the gap is closing due to the school's effective classroom strategies to drive up standards. Staff have strived to push up the attainment of boys by using real contexts for learning and this is paying off, although handwriting and presentation skills are inconsistent. The successful focus on writing has had a noticeable effect on pupils' progress and this is now rightly being extended so that similar techniques can be introduced in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language are supported well to help them make good progress, particularly in literacy and with their phonic (the sounds that letters make) skills.

Pupils are curious about the world around them and enjoy new experiences which broaden their understanding, including annual visits to places of worship, theatres and whole-school topic days such as Bastille Day and Mardi Gras Day. Behaviour is

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mainly good and most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities respond well to the good support they are given. Pupils say they feel safe and know to whom they should go if they are worried about anything or to use the ‘worry boxes’. All pupils understand healthy lifestyles extremely well. They enjoy contributing to the school community and take their responsibilities seriously, for example as ‘helpful heroes’ or as playground buddies. The school council has provided good ideas for improving the school playground by the addition of a tyre area and is often consulted by teachers as part of proposed developments. Pupils develop their enterprise skills well by running the school bank and organising and managing events for charities such as ‘feeling fit Friday’ and Children in Need.

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching was observed across the school with some examples of exemplary practice, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is outstanding when teachers have very high expectations and excellent rapport with pupils. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson on materials, the teacher's superb subject knowledge and questioning made learning great fun and active for the pupils and this developed understanding well. Good classroom management skills ensure that pupils work well together and there are no marked differences in the responses of boys or girls. In the better lessons effective use of success criteria and learning objectives allow pupils to assess their own work. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson in which pupils developed their phonic knowledge well. As a result of the teacher’s

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

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planning building on prior learning and effective classroom management, pupils remained strongly motivated throughout the lesson and made good progress in their understanding of how sounds and letters linked together. The support provided by teaching assistants is generally well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, especially for individual pupils with additional learning needs, although this is not always the case.

The school's curriculum is well organised and increasingly makes links between subjects and takes account of pupils' interests. In a Year 4 information and communication technology (ICT) lesson pupils wrote and edited headlines, amending font and text size, linked to their topic work on the Second World War and literacy. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of richly varied learning opportunities, including the teaching of a modern foreign language. Specialist teaching rooms for music and art greatly enhance the pupils' learning experiences, along with an artist in residence and specialist music days. Personal, social, health education and citizenship are an integral part of learning, and pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their independence and creativity in 'forest school' activities. Collaboration with other schools and the attached children's centre further enriches the pupils' learning and the school's good arrangements for the care of all pupils.

Teaching staff know the pupils and their families well. Transition arrangements ensure pupils are well prepared to move easily into and out of school and between classes. Pupils also benefit from the school's clean and well-maintained buildings and well-kept, attractive grounds. The procedures to promote good attendance are very effective and the school is vigilant in following up absences. A wide array of extra-curricular clubs, visits and residential trips enhance pupils' enjoyment, as well as interesting breakfast club activities and visits to places of worship, such as a mosque, church and synagogue.

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?

The headteacher and all the staff form a coherent team in which all are strongly committed to promoting the best outcomes for pupils. Morale is high, as reflected in responses to inspection questionnaires, and this fosters a positive and enabling environment where staff are keen to implement developments. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement through its monitoring and evaluation. Under the headteacher's strong leadership areas for

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improvement have been identified and tackled with rigour, while building effectively on the school's existing successes. She has developed a strong team, although not all leaders are, as yet, fully involved in the good monitoring and tracking processes.

The school promotes equality of opportunity in all its work and is constantly alert to any variation in achievement, while ensuring that any discrimination is quickly tackled. Pupils' progress is tracked closely, with particular attention to the performance of different groups. The school uses a wide range of strategies and interventions to successfully support pupils identified as being in danger of underachieving. All groups achieve equally well, despite the limited challenge in some lessons, and all pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities. As a result, Tenacres is a highly inclusive school and pupils are able to take full advantage of all it has to offer. The strengthening partnerships between the school and groups within Redditch, as seen in the school's participation in events such as the town's music festivals and arts exhibitions, exemplify the school's good contribution to community cohesion.

Parents and carers are fully involved in every aspect of school life, so that they have a good understanding of the curriculum and how they can help their children. It is no surprise that the school is held with such high regard in the local community. Procedures for ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding, including risk assessments, are robust and comprehensively understood by all staff. The governing body's high level of involvement in day-to-day school life, through frequent visits and monitoring, gives it a very strong basis on which to inform its strategic planning. The school provides good value for money. Parents and carers expressed a high level of satisfaction in the leadership of the school in their questionnaire responses. One stated, 'I am very happy with school, it is well led and staff are very approachable. I have found they are caring and supportive of my child's education.'

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	1
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	2

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money

Early Years Foundation Stage

Every effort is made to meet the children's individual needs and interests in the exceptionally well-planned curriculum. All activities, indoors and out, have a very clear learning focus and timely intervention by adults ensures that children start learning from the minute they walk through the door with their parents or carers. They are encouraged to become independent and to recognise their own name by self-registering using the interactive whiteboard. They participate fully in all activities, showing initiative, independence and good ability to work on their own, alongside or with others. They sustain concentration well, for example using rice, flour, beans and water to develop their senses and language. They show a high degree of curiosity and imagination as they work and play together. Teachers use the children's own ideas well in developing learning opportunities, for example as they changed the gingerbread man story to support phonic development and science.

The outdoor environment is exceptionally well set up to encourage all aspects of learning and has developed well since the last inspection. For example, children are successfully encouraged to solve problems such as how to collect water and to pump it down a tube and try to make it flow faster. In all activities, there is a very clear focus on developing communication skills. Key workers play a crucial role in this, constantly talking to the children and patiently eliciting full sentences as answers, even when speech is indistinct. Staff are meticulous about assessing and recording children's progress and using the information in their planning. Learning journals are used well to document the children's outstanding progress.

Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the safety and welfare of children are paramount and that a culture of reflective practice pervades the whole setting. Children's learning is at the forefront of all planning. Personal contact with parents and carers is maintained on a daily basis, and this enables any emerging issues or concerns to be dealt with efficiently. Consequently, parents and carers express a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the

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questionnaire declared themselves to be extremely satisfied with the school. All those who replied agreed that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps their children safe, that teaching at the school is good, and that the school encourages a healthy lifestyle; the vast majority declared themselves happy with the school's leadership and overall provision. Inspectors found all aspects of the school to be at least good, thus endorsing their views. There were many positive comments and the very few minor concerns were, sensitively, passed on to the school, but followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tenacres First 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 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 247 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	64	44	35	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	68	36	29	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	60	48	62	49	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	76	60	42	33	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	82	65	43	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	80	63	43	34	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	60	51	40	0	0	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)	59	47	57	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	76	60	48	38	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	47	59	47	6	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	57	45	64	51	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	76	60	49	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	85	67	38	30	3	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 8 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tenacres First School, Redditch, B98 0PB

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school. We have judged that yours is a good school. Through talking to you, we know that there are many things that you like about your school.

Here are some of the best things that we found in your school.

- You make good progress in lessons thanks to good teaching.
- You enjoy school, and your behaviour in lessons is usually good.
- You show respect for each other and help each other around school.
- You like the choir, forest schools and the wide range of activities and interesting lessons.
- You have an extremely good understanding of what makes you healthy.
- You have an outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage.

To make things even better for you, we have asked the headteacher and staff to make sure that:

- the leadership team is fully involved in monitoring and tracking your progress
- all groups of pupils are challenged consistently well in lessons.

All of you can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Michael Bartleman
Lead inspector

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