

Tower View Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124046
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380782
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2011
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Buckley
Headteacher	Andrew Gallagher
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons taught by 11 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, parents and carers, staff, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 81 parents and carers.

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

- How well does the school track and analyse the progress of different groups so that teachers can match work to their needs?
- How well does the school meet the needs of boys, pupils eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school (known as 'school action') in order that they can make as much progress as other pupils?
- How successful are the school's actions to improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism?
- How effective are monitoring and evaluation in identifying the key weaknesses in provision so that appropriate plans for improvement can be implemented?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school, although the number of pupils on roll has fallen significantly since the school was last inspected. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is average. The proportion additionally supported by external professionals, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils come from a White British background and there are small numbers from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups. The school site also provides accommodation for before- and after-school clubs and a pre-school. None of these are managed by the school's governing body and so are subject to separate inspections.

Two deputy headteachers left the school in 2010 and have not been replaced. There is currently an acting deputy headteacher. The acting deputy headteacher became the acting headteacher in September 2011 in the absence of the headteacher. An experienced headteacher and Local Leader of Education from another school was seconded to Tower View Primary School a week before the inspection to act as an interim headteacher, with the acting headteacher reverting to her role as acting deputy headteacher.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils' attainment is low on leaving Year 6. Pupils are poorly equipped with regard to the basic skills needed for the next stage of their education. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, but inadequate in Years 3 to 6. Boys, pupils eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school make inadequate progress. The quality of teaching, the curriculum and the support provided for these groups in particular, fail to meet their needs. Teachers have not been provided with the information they need to match tasks to pupils' abilities and interests. There are few curriculum plans in place to help teachers, especially those new to the school, plan lessons that build progressively on what has gone on before. Groups of pupils in need of additional support outside of the classroom have not been identified, so their needs have not been met. Parents and carers have lost confidence in the school's leadership and complain that poor communication keeps them in the dark about what is happening in school. Most outcomes, other than pupils' achievement, are satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and respond enthusiastically to the school's initiatives for healthy eating and an active life.

Inadequate leadership and management are at the heart of the school's problems. The lack of leadership has led to low morale and a high turnover of staff, especially among senior managers. Teachers and teaching assistants want to improve the quality of education provided, but their work has not been monitored effectively and they have not received the guidance and training they need. Data on pupils' progress have not been analysed in sufficient depth so none of the school's leaders, including members of the governing body, have been aware of the poor progress made by groups of pupils. The result of such poor evaluation has been a failure to identify key areas for improvement and an inability to draw up and implement plans to address them. The governing body has not challenged the school's leaders sufficiently, monitored provision well enough to ensure that statutory requirements are met, or taken robust action to prevent the school's decline. The school does not have the capacity to secure sustained improvements.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the school's leadership and management by:
 - establishing a stable senior leadership team with the skills necessary to drive the school forward
 - implementing rigorous and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation procedures
 - using the results of such procedures to identify key areas for improvement and implementing suitable plans to address them
 - taking steps to raise staff morale and improve the confidence of parents and carers in the school
 - securing a governing body equipped with the skills necessary to fulfil its responsibilities and meet all statutory requirements with respect to the curriculum, information for parents and carers, and equality of opportunity.

- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure that all groups make at least satisfactory progress by:
 - analysing the progress made by different groups and ensuring teachers use the results to match tasks accurately to pupils' abilities and interests
 - providing additional support for groups where necessary, especially those known to be eligible for free school meals
 - drawing up curriculum plans for all subjects and year groups so that teachers are able to plan work that builds progressively on previous learning
 - providing teachers and teaching assistants with training appropriate to their needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children join the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age. Attainment remains a little below average by the end of Year 2, but falls to a low level by the end of Year 6 as a result of the inadequate progress of different groups. These differences between groups are significant. Girls make satisfactory progress, while boys' progress is inadequate. The differences are apparent in lessons. Boys are not encouraged to respond to questions to the same extent as girls. In lessons, girls are quick to put their hands up to answer questions, and teachers choose them rather than encouraging boys or selecting those who are not putting themselves forward. All get on with their tasks without any fuss, but boys do not always work as hard as girls because they are not told how much work is expected in a given time. Teaching assistants work with pupils whose special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported by the school. They do not always have the expertise and training to support such pupils effectively, especially in learning to read. This contributes to pupils' inadequate progress, which is slower

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than that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported through the involvement of outside agencies. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Pupils rarely misbehave even when tasks are too easy or the pace of lessons slow.

Attendance is average, but has fallen since the school was last inspected. Most pupils say they enjoy school, and this is supported by the views of parents and carers. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe and know who to turn to for help in school. They get on well with one another and their teachers. Pupils show concern for others less fortunate than themselves, and have raised considerable sums of money to support charities and improve the school environment. Their role in the local community is satisfactory but improving as they join the parish council to play a part in its deliberations. Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures, speaking enthusiastically about 'India Week', for example, and their visits to places of worship.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers do not have the information or tools to do their job effectively. The same task is often given to the whole class, regardless of pupils' abilities or starting points, because teachers are not aware of the differences in progress between groups of pupils. When in groups, the teacher usually works with a target group which does not include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school, so they rarely benefit from the teacher's expertise. Time is often wasted at

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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the start of lessons; teachers spend too long talking to pupils, especially in the mornings, and pupils are not quickly and actively involved in tasks. There are pockets of good practice in the school, but these are not shared to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently satisfactory or better level. Curriculum planning is inadequate in terms of supporting teaching and meeting the needs of all pupils. There are no curriculum plans for the mixed-age Year 4 and 5 classes, all of which have new teachers. Where plans do exist, they fail to point out where basic skills of literacy and numeracy can be developed through other subjects. Planning for science and information and communication technology is particularly weak and the school cannot be sure that it is meeting statutory requirements in this respect.

Although the overall quality of care, guidance and support provided for the majority of pupils is inadequate, the school provides good care for individual pupils with behavioural difficulties or poor attitudes to learning. The care and nurture they receive through the magic room and rainbow room successfully helps them to modify their behaviour and exclusions are rare as a result. Good support is also provided for those who have any particular worries about moving schools. Pupils with speech and language difficulties make better progress than other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities because they receive effective support both from external specialists and a trained teacher within the school. Support for large groups of pupils is ineffective in helping them to learn and thrive within school. The progress of pupils eligible for free school meals is much worse than others, but nobody has realised this or established the causes. As a result, inadequate systems are in place to provide them with guidance on how they can learn more effectively and raise their achievement or to help parents and carers to support their children’s learning at home. Procedures to improve attendance lack rigour. Accurate records are kept but too much time elapses before letters are sent out. New technology is used well to inform parents and carers when their children have had a good day, but not to follow up reasons for absence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The school’s drive for improvement is inadequate because it does not have the systems in place to identify weaknesses and address them successfully. Staff have not received written feedback on any monitoring of their lessons so are unaware of what they need to do to improve. Requests for professional development have been ignored. Each member of the senior leadership team has a different version of the

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school development plan, each with different priorities and none firmly rooted in an accurate and thorough analysis of pupils’ progress. Data on pupils’ attainment and progress varies between plans and reports. The school’s leaders are unaware of the progress of different groups so provision does not meet their needs, leading to inadequate equality of opportunity for pupils to achieve as well as they can. Targets are reasonably challenging, but performance falls far short of them.

Governance is inadequate because the governing body does not ask probing questions or check the accuracy of the information with which it is provided. The governing body has not ensured that the curriculum meets requirements. Several policies are out of date, including that related to equality of opportunity, although a comprehensive disability access plan is in place. Two staff have taken responsibility for safeguarding. They are diligent in their work and ensure that statutory requirements are met. Teachers make satisfactory provision for community cohesion, but this has not been supported by the school’s leaders. There has been no audit of need, no plan for extending community cohesion or evaluation of the school’s provision in this area. The school has received considerable support from the local authority. However, the opportunities offered by this key partnership have been wasted. For example, all teachers were trained in peer observation, but none have been given the opportunity to put what they learnt into practice.

Staff, parents and carers are very unhappy with the school’s leadership and management. Their views are neither sought nor valued. Communications are particularly poor. Parents and carers have not been informed about important developments in the school and rumours abound as a result. Reports on their children’s progress are limited in content and do not meet statutory requirements.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	4
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and are happy in Reception as a result of the good provision that is made for their welfare. Their speaking develops well as they are given many opportunities to discuss what they are doing and encouraged to use new vocabulary to describe what they see and hear. The bright and welcoming environment is used effectively to stimulate children’s speaking skills. Progress in reading, writing and number work is satisfactory, but is not as good as in speaking. Time for developing these skills is not always used purposefully and opportunities to read, form letters and count are not always taken. The outside area is used well to promote children’s physical development, but there is variation between classes in the extent to which children are allowed freely to access this area for other learning activities. Children’s progress is assessed frequently, but the results are not always used to plan the next steps in learning needed to promote good progress.

Parents and carers of children in Reception are more positive about the school than those with children in other year groups. The leader ensures that parents and carers are closely involved with their children’s learning and are able to support their progress at home. The leader is well aware of the key areas for improvement, but plans to address these lack sufficient detail.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

While parents and carers are generally satisfied with much that the school provides, they have grave concerns about leadership and management; the extent to which they are consulted and their opinions valued; and the management of behaviour. Many complained about poor communication. Inspectors met with parents and carers, checked a sample of reports, analysed letters sent to families and checked the systems for seeking their views. Inspectors found that parents and carers are not being sufficiently informed about what is going on at the school and the impact on their children’s learning. Their views are not sought in any systematic way. Reports do not provide parents and carers with the information to which they are entitled.

Concerns about behaviour arise because parents and carers are not informed about the handling of incidents. Inspectors checked the way that behaviour is managed in the school and especially how incidents of poor behaviour are tackled. These were found to be appropriate and such incidents are very rare. Leadership and

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management was a focus for many inspection activities. Inspectors found serious weaknesses in many aspects of leadership and management.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tower View 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 308 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	47	37	46	1	1	4	5
The school keeps my child safe	36	44	32	40	6	7	5	6
The school informs me about my child’s progress	32	40	38	47	6	7	5	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	33	40	49	8	10	5	6
The teaching is good at this school	27	33	45	56	1	1	5	6
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	22	52	64	4	5	5	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	28	53	65	0	0	5	6
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)	18	22	48	59	3	4	6	7
The school meets my child’s particular needs	22	27	45	56	6	7	5	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	12	46	57	10	12	10	12
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	21	36	44	10	12	7	9
The school is led and managed effectively	7	9	26	32	18	22	18	22
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	28	43	53	8	10	6	7

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 08 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.



9 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tower View Primary School, Winhill, DE15 0EZ

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. You told us that you enjoy working with the school cooks to learn about nutritious food, and you clearly know a lot about how to stay fit and healthy.

Unfortunately your school has not improved since it was last inspected and you are no longer receiving a good enough education. The people responsible for leading the school are unaware of its strengths and weaknesses so have not been able to improve it. They have not found out what teachers and your parents and carers think about the school. Nobody has worked out how much progress you are making and then explained to teachers which of you need the most help. This means that the teachers are not able to give you work or support that helps you learn well enough and you do not make the progress that you should.

We have asked the people responsible for leading the school to find out exactly what needs improving and to put it right. This will involve checking your progress so that teachers can plan lessons that help you learn and give extra support to those of you who need it. Your teachers require a list of the topics to be covered and what needs to be taught. We have also asked the school's leaders to provide your teachers with any extra training they need.

Your parents and carers are dissatisfied with some aspects of the school's work. We have asked school leaders to talk to your parents and carers to explain what has to happen to improve your education. You can help by coming to school every day and always trying your very best and working as hard as possible.

We have decided that your school needs extra help, which we call 'special measures', to make sure that it improves as quickly as it possibly can. Inspectors will visit the school regularly to check on progress.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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