

Turnfurlong Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110351
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	378084
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Wynford Jones

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Strachan
Headteacher	Joanne Erasmus
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2008
School address	Turnfurlong Lane Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP21 7PL
Telephone number	01296 489264
Fax number	01296 489262
Email address	office@tjs.org.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection date(s)	3–4 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Wynford Jones

Additional inspector

David Westall

Additional inspector

Sarah Bean

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 23 lessons, observing 15 teachers. They listened to some Year 6 pupils reading. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) when planning the inspection; inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 199 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Turnfurlong Junior School is larger than most schools of its type. The large majority of the pupils are of White British origin. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds, mostly of Asian origin. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly similar to the national average. None are at the early stages of learning English. Very few pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual starting or finishing times. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs (supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs) is broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably lower than average. In 2011 the school met the government's current floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The headteacher was appointed in an acting capacity in January 2011 and became the substantive headteacher in January 2012.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key 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.
- The school is not satisfactory because pupils do not make enough progress and their attainment has declined since the previous inspection. Leaders have failed to adequately address the recommendation from the previous inspection, to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils do not have good enough skills for mathematical investigation, nor do they get enough opportunities to practise basic skills in writing. The broadly average attainment at the end of Year 6 represents inadequate progress, given pupils’ attainment when they start Year 3.
- Teaching over time is inadequate. In too many lessons teachers fail to ensure that all pupils make enough progress, especially in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers do not consistently use what they know about pupils’ achievements to make sure their work challenges everyone, especially the more able. The pace in some lessons is pedestrian and some teachers do not use questioning strategies well enough to extend pupils’ learning. The quality of marking has improved recently but this is not consistent across all subjects and classes. There are examples of good teaching on which the school can build.
- Pupils’ behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils are polite and show positive attitudes to learning. They have a secure understanding of personal safety.
- Leadership and management are inadequate because senior leaders have not ensured that all teaching is effective in meeting pupils’ needs. As a result, pupils do not make enough progress. The governing body, senior and middle leaders have not monitored attainment and challenged underperformance and inadequate teaching with sufficient rigour. There are recent signs of

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improvement following the appointment of the headteacher and pupils' progress is starting to accelerate. However, these improvements have still to be consolidated and lost ground regained. Without external support and robust monitoring, the school does not currently have the capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make at least good progress, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
 - providing more opportunities for them to write at length and to consolidate their writing skills in other lessons
 - improving their skills when undertaking mathematical investigations.
- By Easter 2013 improve the quality of teaching and learning to at least good by:
 - ensuring teachers use assessment information effectively to raise expectations and to challenge all groups of pupils, particularly the more able
 - eliminating inadequate teaching and ensuring all pupils make more rapid progress in lessons and over time
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils consistently receive regular guidance to improve their work
 - making certain that all lessons proceed at an appropriate pace, engaging pupils in learning
 - making sure teachers use questioning strategies effectively.
- As a matter of urgency, strengthen the capacity for sustaining school improvement by:
 - improving the skills of senior and middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and in taking action to address weaknesses
 - ensuring that school development plans clearly identify the desired outcomes so that success can be evaluated
 - developing the skills of the governing body in holding senior leaders to account for pupils' achievements and the pace of school improvement.

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Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment is consistently well above average when pupils start school. It has been declining by the end of Year 6 for the last three years and was broadly average in 2011. Consequently pupils' progress is inadequate. The school's assessment information suggests that progress is starting to accelerate and attainment this year is on course to be slightly higher, but this still represents inadequate progress given pupils' starting points.

Pupils are not making enough progress in writing because there are insufficient opportunities for them to write at length and to consolidate and extend their skills in other lessons. Basic strategies, such as the use of dictionaries and thesauri, to check spelling and to extend their vocabulary, are not used routinely. In mathematics there has been a marked decline over the last three years. Recent changes in the organisation of the curriculum and better use of assessment data are beginning to have an impact. Standards are rising, but have not yet reached appropriate levels given the pupils' abilities. The vast majority of pupils have a satisfactory understanding of mathematical terminology and strategies to undertake calculations. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their investigative skills or apply their mathematical knowledge.

Most pupils are developing their reading skills satisfactorily. They have an appropriate understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and use a range of strategies, including context clues, to read unfamiliar words. They talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and offer suggestions for alternative endings to stories. Pupils are able to use reference books competently to support their learning but do not do this as a matter of routine. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach above average levels in reading by the end of the year.

Most pupils have a positive attitude and want to learn. They respond well to effective teaching and readily engage in lessons. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils worked together well to identify adjectives to describe various settings. In contrast pupils' enthusiasm is not captured to this extent in other lessons. Comments from pupils included, 'Sometimes the work is too easy and sometimes too hard', 'We have done this before' and 'In some lessons the teachers talk too much so we cannot get on with our work.'

Pupils' progress is starting to accelerate because senior leaders are now holding regular meetings with each member of staff to discuss individual pupils' attainment and progress. However the progress of most groups of pupils is below that found nationally. The learning and progress of the majority of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are similarly inadequate. Pupils are losing ground on similar groups nationally.

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The majority of parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire consider that their children are making good progress. Inspectors found that pupils make better progress in some classes than in others, but overall pupils' progress is inadequate.

Quality of teaching

Weaknesses in teaching over time have led to pupils making inadequate progress by the end of Year 6. Too many lessons seen during the inspection were not taught to an acceptable standard. This is because teachers do not always take full account of assessment information to plan work that raises expectations and closely matches the needs of all pupils, especially those who are more able. In some lessons teachers talk for too long and pupils are not fully engaged. In weaker lessons teachers do not follow up initial questions to confirm or extend pupils' learning. Adult support is usually deployed satisfactorily to assist individuals and small-group learning, but sometimes, at the start and end of lessons, teachers do not use additional adults to best effect. As a result some pupils, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are not challenged in these parts of the lesson.

Teachers' skills and success in adapting the curriculum to promote pupils' reading, writing and mathematical development and accelerating their progress are variable. Following the recent revision of curriculum provision and lesson planning, the majority of teachers are now beginning to pitch the pupils' work at an appropriate level and most pupils no longer unnecessarily repeat work undertaken earlier in the school. However, in some classes the expectations of what pupils can achieve remain too low.

In the more effective lessons seen during the inspection, teachers had high expectations of pupils, captured their interest and set them challenging work. Effective questioning in these lessons was used well to check pupils' understanding and eliminate any misunderstandings before moving on. Pupils are increasingly being asked to evaluate their own learning. Some teachers offer pupils clear and regular verbal and written advice to improve their work but this good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Teachers act as positive role models to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. Their attendance is above average. Pupils' positive interaction with each other contributes appropriately to their social and moral development. Pupils are welcoming, respectful, polite and courteous to visitors. They are proud of their school and take good care of its resources and the environment. Pupils show respect and understanding for one another and the large majority work together well. For example, members of the jazz band listened carefully to each other as they successfully took turns to improvise a few bars in a piece of music which they had created for themselves. Pupils are aware of different

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forms of bullying, including verbal, physical and cyber bullying. They confirm that instances are infrequent and, should they occur, they are dealt with effectively. The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to understand how they can keep themselves safe. They are able to explain clearly the issues relating to personal safety, for example, when using the internet and on extended educational visits. Recent improvements in some of the teaching have contributed to pupils adopting a better attitude towards learning.

The school's records show that behaviour is satisfactory. There are occasional instances of low-level disruption, when work does not meet pupils' needs or the pace of learning is too slow, but generally there are no incidents of serious misbehaviour. Nearly all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are convinced their children feel safe and most stated that behaviour is good. Inspectors endorse their views that pupils feel safe and confirm that behaviour has improved, but it is not yet good.

Leadership and management

The governing body and senior staff have overseen a decline in the school's performance over time, and have not taken sufficiently urgent action to address ineffective teaching and pupils' inadequate progress. Since the appointment of the headteacher there have been signs of improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning, the quality of teaching and in the leadership of middle managers. However, there is insufficient drive and capacity to bring about rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and to accelerate pupils' progress. The school development plan, although correctly identifying the key areas for improvement, does not make explicit links between actions and the intended impact on pupils' attainment and progress. There are no measurable outcomes by which the actions can be evaluated.

Staff have responded positively to senior leaders' initiatives to provide for their professional development and to improve provision within the school, although changes are still at an early stage of development and any improvements have not yet been consolidated or sustained. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are in place and termly meetings about pupils' progress have been introduced. Information technology is used more effectively to share information about pupils' progress and attainment, to identify underachievement and to challenge teachers. Training has successfully improved the skills of some staff in using assessment to support pupils' learning, although this is inconsistent across the school. Senior and some middle leaders have recently assumed their responsibilities and have yet to gain the skills needed to critically evaluate the impact of teaching on learning.

The chair of the governing body acknowledges that the school requires additional support. Until recently, although supportive, the governing body had not monitored the performance of the school sufficiently rigorously or held senior leaders to account. Actions to address the longstanding underachievement of different groups of pupils have not been effective. Consequently, the promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is inadequate. There have been recent

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changes in the way the governing body operates but not all members have expertise in holding leaders and managers to account. The governing body ensures that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding children. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and staff are suitably trained.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, but it is not tailored sufficiently well to meet the academic needs of all pupils and to ensure they make progress. The curriculum is enhanced by theme days and weeks, visits and visitors to the school. Strengths are in the provision of art, music and sporting activities. These support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

7 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Turnfurlong Junior School, Aylesbury, HP21 9PL

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school, for completing the questionnaire and talking to us so politely. I'd like to say a special thank you to the jazz band. I really enjoyed the session I observed, especially when you started to improvise. There are some things that your school does well; for example, relationships between adults and pupils are good and everyone is made to feel welcome in the school. The staff have helped you to develop by encouraging you to take part in a number of musical and sporting events, and have organised several extended educational visits, in this country and abroad. However, the school has been less successful in making sure that you make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics. There has been a gradual decline in your achievements and this is shown in the national test results since the last inspection. Although your attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is about the same as pupils in most schools, it should be higher and many of you could be doing better.

Some recent changes are starting to have a positive impact on your learning. However, the inspectors found that the governing body, the leadership team and the staff need extra help to improve your school more rapidly. Consequently, we have placed the school into 'special measures'. This means that inspectors will visit regularly to check that you and your school are making enough progress. We have asked the governing body, the senior leaders and the staff to do three things.

- Make certain you make quicker progress in writing and mathematics. They can improve your writing by getting you to practise your skills, including writing longer pieces, in other lessons. We want them to help you improve your investigating skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching. We want them to be sure work is hard enough for you and questions challenge you. We also want teachers to be sure lessons are going at a quick pace, and to give you more written guidance about how you can improve your work. You can help by reading this guidance carefully.
- Develop the skills of the governing body and leadership team in checking the work of the school, and writing better plans to help it improve rapidly.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones
Lead inspector

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