

Tipton St John CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113438
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	378708
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Jenkins
Headteacher	Gillian Morris
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Watts

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine lessons or part lessons, taught by three different teachers. He held discussions with the headteacher, the staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils. Pupils were heard reading. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. He analysed 71 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as 88 from pupils and 7 from staff.

Information about the school

Tipton St John Church of England Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. A lower-than-average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum standards expected by the government.

The school is organised into three classes. Maple class consists of Reception, Year 1 and 2 pupils. Willow class has pupils from Years 2, 3 and 4 and Oak class consists of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Tipton St John is a good school. Most pupils achieve well because of good teaching. It is not outstanding because recent inconsistencies in the progress of pupils in Maple class prevent achievement being better than good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Weaknesses in the planning of activities prevent progress being better. Years 1 and 2 pupils in Maple class make good progress in reading and mathematics, but their progress in writing is satisfactory. Their handwriting is under developed and there are insufficient opportunities for them to write extended pieces. Pupils in the Willow and Oak classes make good progress in all areas. The drive to improve mathematics in Key Stage 2 has been successful and more pupils attain the higher levels than is seen nationally. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is securely above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall. There are examples of outstanding practice, but there is also some satisfactory teaching. Where the teaching is strongest, teachers convey high expectations and provide challenging and exciting tasks which are well matched to pupils’ needs; pupils are inspired, motivated and make rapid gains in their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, expectations of what pupils can achieve and levels of challenge are not as high. Strategies to promote learning, especially in writing, are limited.
- Pupils are well behaved, and they are kept safe. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, although in the best lessons they are outstanding. Pupils are courteous, friendly and considerate. Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and educational direction. She is well supported by the senior teacher. Leaders promote good achievement and good behaviour. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school is striving to improve teaching where it is less than good. Recent improvement to mathematics achievement demonstrates a strong capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the planning and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children make consistently good progress in all areas of learning.
- Accelerate progress in writing for Years 1 and 2 pupils in Maple class by:
 - taking action to ensure that most pupils' handwriting by Year 2 is well formed, fluent and joined
 - using a range of strategies to promote good writing, such as teacher demonstration, drama and visual stimuli
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces in a range of areas.
- Eliminate satisfactory teaching by ensuring that in all classes:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are always high
 - tasks are challenging and well matched to pupils' different abilities and needs.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Most pupils make good progress and attainment is securely above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Almost all parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire stated that their children were making good progress. However, there is some variation in pupils' performance. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 in the younger age class has dipped a little recently because of staff absence and changes.

Children enter the school with knowledge, understanding and skills that are broadly expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the areas of learning. The planning of teaching and the curriculum is not secure enough to promote consistently good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Across the school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress similar to other groups in their class. In the best practice, pupils' needs are carefully assessed and pupils receive well-targeted individual or small group support. More-able pupils are challenged and extended well, particularly in the Willow and Oak classes. As a result, an above-average proportion attain the higher than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in any subject.

In speaking and listening, pupils across the school make good progress because of

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the well-planned opportunities for them to discuss their learning and to express their ideas.

Good progress is made in reading because of a regular and effective programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Good support from parents and carers contributes to pupils' performance in reading. In the current Year 2, attainment in reading is above average. By Year 6, pupils are avid and confident readers with a well-above-average proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5.

Pupils' writing is a less consistent picture. In Willow and Oak classes, pupils write effectively for different audiences and in different styles. Handwriting is neat, fluent and joined. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate. Pupils apply and develop their writing skills well to subjects other than English. For example, pupils in Willow class used their research, information and technology skills and writing skills well to produce informative and well-presented accounts of life in Ancient Egypt. In Maple class, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are only making satisfactory progress in writing. Few Year 2 pupils are writing with a joined style and written accounts are often brief and limited in scope. Extended pieces of writing, particularly in subjects other than English, are lacking.

The school's drive to raise achievement in mathematics has been successful and an increased proportion of pupils are attaining the higher levels. In a high-quality mathematics lesson in Oak class, pupils made rapid progress in handling data. They acquired new mathematical vocabulary and gained a very secure knowledge and understanding of mean, median, mode and range. They applied this newly acquired knowledge extremely well in investigating a range of data.

Pupils make good gains in the knowledge and understanding of science. They acquire and apply skills well in carrying out investigations.

Quality of teaching

Nearly all parents and carers who completed the questionnaire stated that their children were well taught. Most teaching is good or better, but it varies from satisfactory to outstanding.

In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Oak class, pupils were extremely motivated by the teacher's high expectations and strong subject expertise. Pupils listened attentively to first rate explanations and gained a very good understanding of the mean, median, mode and range when analysing data. Skilful questioning effectively checked the pupils' understanding. For the main part of the lesson, challenging and interesting tasks were well matched to pupils' different needs. Pupils were fully engaged, productive and made rapid gains applying their learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a clear balance of adult-led activities and those initiated by the children. Children have adequate opportunities to explore and learn independently. Planned learning activities are not sufficiently linked to a

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theme or between the areas of learning. As a result, some activities lack a clear purpose and hinder children making better than expected progress.

Teachers' expectations of learning and behaviour are consistently high in Willow and Oak classes. Pupils respond very positively to these. Expectations of learning, behaviour and presentation of work are not always as high across the whole school.

In most lessons, teachers successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They create a positive climate for learning and foster strong relationships. Pupils have good opportunities to work collaboratively in groups in investigating and solving problems. The opportunities provided for them to discuss their learning in pairs have a positive impact on their speaking and listening skills. The teaching of basic skills, such as letters and their sounds (phonics), is effective. As a result, pupils make good progress in reading and attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and 6.

Where teaching is satisfactory, strategies to promote learning, particularly the development of writing skills, are less effective. There is a lack of teacher demonstration on how to create and improve sentences or how to use a number line to solve subtraction problems. Drama and visual stimuli are under-used strategies for generating ideas for pupils' writing.

In most lessons, assessment information is used well to plan teaching and to match activities and tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. Pupils are therefore challenged and make good progress. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The marking of pupils' work is effective and is helpful and constructive.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Analysis of the school's records and discussion with pupils show that behaviour is typically good. In Willow and Oak classes, pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour and relationships with others are often exemplary. Attitudes and behaviour of pupils in Maple class are not as high. A few are not always fully focused on their learning and this can hinder the pace of learning in the lesson. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour in some lessons.

All parents and carers who completed the questionnaire believe that their children feel safe at school and that they are well looked after. A typical comment was, 'Children are well taught, cared for and kept safe'. Pupils confirmed that they feel safe, behaviour is good and they are very well looked after by staff. Almost all parents and carers believe that the school deals with bullying effectively. Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name calling and cyber bullying. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. The school's records and comments from pupils, parents and carers indicate that incidents of

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serious misbehaviour are rare. There are effective procedures for dealing with these. The school takes positive steps to monitor and promote good attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior teacher convey high expectations and a culture of improvement. They are focused on promoting good achievement, good teaching and positive behaviour. Parents and carers praised the school's 'wonderful ethos'. Good emphasis is placed on safeguarding and all requirements are met.

Self-evaluation is accurate and thorough. As a result, the school has a clear overview of its performance and takes positive action to bring about improvements. Professional development and training are well linked to the school's improvement priorities. Positive action by the school has successfully raised achievement in mathematics. There are clear procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching, but practice is not yet consistently good in all areas of the school.

The curriculum promotes good achievement for pupils overall. A wide range of additional activities, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is effectively tackled. However, not all pupils are performing consistently well in all classes. Children's progress is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in writing in the youngest class.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. The school's core values, such as forgiveness, friendship, hope, kindness, love, patience, perseverance and trust, are promoted through all activities. Pupils have good opportunities for prayer and reflection. The strong partnership with the church contributes well to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The members of the governing body show a good understanding of the school's performance. They are actively involved in the life of the school. For example, a governor made a valuable contribution to a science lesson where pupils investigated the use of yeast in making bread. The school engages well with parents and carers. The survey indicates that the vast majority are pleased with the care and education provided for their children.

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.

15 June 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Tipton St John CofE VA Primary School, Sidmouth, EX10 0AG

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school. By giving me your views, including those some of you supplied in questionnaires, and showing me your work you helped me to make all the judgements about your school. I enjoyed my visit. Tipton St John is a good school. These are the main strengths.

- You enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is above average.
- You are making good progress overall because of good teaching.
- Behaviour is good and you relate well to others. It is often outstanding in Willow and Oak classes.
- You feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take very good care of you.
- The school is led well by your headteacher, and she receives good support from staff and governors.

There are a few points for improvement.

- Better planning of learning activities would help children in Reception to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 in Maple class could make faster progress in writing. I have asked the headteacher and staff to help you with your handwriting, use methods to help to improve your writing skills and to allow you to write long pieces.
- In a few lessons, the teacher should expect more of you and ensure that the tasks provided are challenging and not too easy or too difficult for you.

You can all help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts
Lead inspector

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