

Tottenham Infant School and Children's Centre

Tottenham Road, Palmer's Green, N13 6HX

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from low starting points and achieve well. In 2013 pupils reached average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding, especially in Reception and the nurture group.
- Pupils in the nurture group achieve extremely well because of the excellent support they receive, tailored precisely to their needs.
- The many pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because staff adapt the curriculum to help them and successfully focus on developing their speaking and listening skills.
- All staff know pupils very well and run a wide range of support programmes for them to meet every need.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons and around the school. They say they feel safe.
- The school's rigorous approach to following-up any absence has led to attendance improving and it is now above average.
- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained and strengthened the school's nurturing ethos. Leaders, managers and governors have improved teaching and helped standards to rise.
- The school has excellent links with parents, who fully support its work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More-able pupils are not always given demanding enough work to make sure they reach the higher levels of attainment.
- The quality of feedback to pupils through marking varies. Sometimes it is not detailed enough to help them to improve their work.
- Pupils do not always have the confidence to apply their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) to read unfamiliar words.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting varies. Letters are sometimes not correctly formed and the writing is not always joined up.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, including some joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and, with the headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils’ work.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school’s partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and spoke with several parents outside the school.
- The inspectors considered the 44 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector
 Sibani Raychaudhuri
 Jo Jones

Additional Inspector
 Additional Inspector
 Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized infant school.
- Most pupils come from many different minority ethnic backgrounds and three quarters speak English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals among others) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The school has specially resourced provision for up to ten pupils with special educational needs in the form of a nurture group for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school shares its building with a children's centre, which is inspected separately.
- In the past 18 months a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed from within the school's existing staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure more-able pupils are consistently challenged to reach the higher levels of attainment
 - giving all pupils specific feedback about how to improve their work when marking their books.
- Raise attainment in English by:
 - developing pupils' skills in phonics so that they apply their knowledge systematically and confidently to their reading
 - improving pupils' handwriting through the promotion of more accurate letter formation and joined-up writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children who join the school come from abroad speaking no English. Their starting points are low. Staff are skilled at helping them to settle in quickly, making their families welcome, and giving them a good grasp of the English language to prepare them well for the next stages of their education.
- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception because teachers plan a good range of activities that draw on their interests and are imaginatively designed. For example, Nursery children loved using mobile 'phones to communicate with one another and their teacher.
- Children develop self-confidence and independence quickly in the Nursery and Reception as class routines are established and they select their own resources to use both inside and outside. The rich learning environment entices them to explore and find things out for themselves.
- Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, as teachers build on the early basic skills pupils bring with them from Reception. This helped them to reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 in 2013, an improvement on the 2012 results, when fewer pupils reached the higher levels of attainment. Teachers have identified more-able pupils who are capable of doing better and are taking some steps to help them reach their potential. However, on occasions, teaching does not always challenge these pupils to make rapid progress.
- Pupils love listening to stories and this helps them to build up a useful bank of vocabulary to support their writing. Some pupils, however, are not confident in applying phonics skills to read unfamiliar words and this limits their progress. The school has identified that pupils are not doing well enough in the Year 1 reading check. In 2012 girls did much better than boys, but this gap narrowed in 2013. The school has made the systematic development of phonics a key priority for improvement.
- Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, including letters, stories, poems, instructions and factual reports. Year 2 pupils wrote home as wounded soldiers in the Crimean War describing their experiences and meeting Florence Nightingale. Last year's books show that pupils make good progress over time in their writing, but the quality of their handwriting varies and is not sufficiently joined up to be fluent. In some cases, pupils' letter formation is inaccurate.
- Pupils have opportunities to solve real-life problems in mathematics and develop a solid grasp of number. Teachers give pupils next steps in their learning, which help them to make rapid progress in their mathematical understanding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because support is tailored to the individual pupil and teaching assistants are trained well in meeting the full range of their needs.
- The progress of pupils in the nurture group is outstanding because of the high expectations of staff and the way learning is broken down into precise steps to help them succeed.
- The many pupils from minority ethnic groups who speak English as an additional language achieve well because staff adapt the curriculum to support them and focus on developing their speaking and listening skills. Above all they make learning fun, so that pupils soon acquire the proficiency they need.
- The attainment of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils in the school and better than similar pupils nationally. This has been the case for the past two years. The funding is spent on providing programmes of support run by additional teaching assistants and giving pupils memorable experiences to enhance their learning. These are proving successful in helping these pupils to do as well as their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Teachers use questioning well to check what pupils understand and to extend their thinking. They are clear about what they want pupils to learn and conduct learning at a brisk pace.
- In the best lessons activities are planned well to match the needs of pupils and are linked to their interests so that they appeal to them and make them want to work hard. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoyed tasks on the theme of wild animals. Teachers guide the teaching assistants skilfully to help them support individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to make their own choices about learning and become independent.
- In the Nursery and Reception children settle very quickly. Behaviour is managed well. Adults provide good role models and form strong relationships with the children. They keep a close eye on how well children are doing and meet regularly to discuss their needs and plan next steps in their learning.
- Teaching in the nurture group is outstanding. The staff work extremely well together and take every opportunity to extend pupils' learning, skilfully linking subjects together. For example, pupils were making shape pictures, cutting shapes out of clay, singing shape songs and reading a shape story while learning about the properties of shape.
- While teaching meets the needs of most pupils, at times more-able pupils do not have sufficiently demanding work to do, and sometimes have to sit through explanations of learning they already know before beginning their own activities. This stops them making more rapid progress.
- All work is marked and pupils know what they have done well. They are often given points for improvement, but sometimes these are not specific enough to help pupils improve rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They behave well in class and around the school, show respect to one another and to adults and are polite and friendly to visitors.
- Parents who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors before school agreed that behaviour was good and well managed. Pupils know about the rewards and sanctions the school uses and respond well to these. The few pupils with more challenging behaviour are managed very well. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils say bullying is rare. They know what bullying means. They are confident that adults will help them if they have any worries. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe on the roads and the dangers of fire, and the potential dangers posed by strangers.
- The school is committed to all pupils being able to ride a bicycle by the time they leave, and has purchased its own fleet to assist with this ambition.
- Pupils in the nurture group behave extremely well because of the calm environment and the interesting and enjoyable learning activities. The adults are highly skilled at helping these pupils to acquire the strategies they need to manage their own feelings and behaviour. Pupils from the nurture group successfully transfer back into mainstream classes and are prepared well for moving on with their education.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because sometimes pupils can lose focus if learning does not fully engage them, for example if it is too easy for them.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously as members of the school council and guardians of the school's electricity supply. They make sure pupils' views are heard and that energy is conserved.
- The school's strong procedures have improved attendance so that it is now above average. This reflects the pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's new headteacher and deputy headteacher have the same passion for helping pupils become the best they can be that has always prevailed at Tottenham. Pupils thrive in a caring and stimulating environment and are known as individuals by all staff. This contributes extremely well to the school's 'family feel', something that is greatly valued by parents.
 - The school's view of itself is accurate and based on the regular checking of its work by leaders and managers at all levels. A new tracking system is helping senior leaders to find out more readily how different groups of pupils are doing and so hold teachers to account.
 - The school arranges many different programmes of support for its pupils, tailoring these to individual needs. Leaders carefully measure the success of each programme and make adjustments based on its impact. In this way all pupils are included and have an equal chance to achieve well.
 - The leadership of the nurture group is outstanding, which also has a positive impact more widely on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. The leader makes sure that pupils' learning is at the centre of all its work, and makes excellent use of resources and staffing to have the most impact on pupils' progress and development.
 - Teachers are given clear guidance about how to improve their practice and the school supports subject leaders well to help them check the quality of teaching and pupils' performance. Leaders and governors have identified that subject leaders need more time to analyse data themselves and have built in opportunities for them to hone their skills this year.
 - As a result of actions taken by leaders, managers and governors, standards are rising and teaching is continuing to improve. The curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with strengths in music, art, dance and drama. There is an emphasis on celebrating the diverse range of languages and cultures that pupils bring to school.
 - The school's new primary sport funding is being spent on swimming lessons and additional coaching to enhance pupils' well-being and develop staff subject knowledge.
 - The school works extremely well with parents and fosters strong relationships from the start. Staff make a point of visiting each home to find out about new children and put up a welcoming display of photographs and information from their visits in school to greet them when they arrive. There are also excellent links with the neighbouring children's centre.
 - The local authority recognises the many strengths of the school and offers appropriate light-touch support.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience to their roles. They ask challenging questions of leaders about the quality of teaching and about data on pupils' performance. They know how the school manages teachers' performance and what it is doing to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance. Governors take a keen interest in all aspects of the school's work, and make sure that the finances are spent wisely, including the pupil premium. They see that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils’ needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils’ needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school’s leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102006
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	425640

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Murray
Headteacher	Sian Mainwaring
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 June 2009
Telephone number	020 8829 1100
Fax number	020 8829 1118
Email address	office@tottenham.enfield.sch.uk

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