

Tennyson Road Infant School

Highfield Road, Rushden, NN10 9QD

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | 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 enter the school with skills which are below those typical for their age. They leave at the end of Year 2 with above average levels of knowledge and skills and so progress is good.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in mathematics and writing and attainment is above average by Year 2.
- Teaching is good. Exciting topics with visits and visitors ensure that pupils are interested in their lessons and they learn well.
- Behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Pupils talk about enjoying coming to school and this is evident when they work hard in lessons.
- Teachers are clear that additional support through local partnerships has improved their understanding of how children learn.
- The headteacher has the highest expectation for the school community and is well supported by her staff in improving the school.
- Governors provide the right balance of support and challenge to help the school improve and have successfully developed their monitoring skills so they know how well pupils learn.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always encourage teaching assistants to be involved in the whole lesson and this means pupils do not always benefit from the high numbers of skilful adults present.
- When more-able pupils show they can do the tasks in lessons, adults do not consistently set fresh challenges so they have demanding work throughout the lesson.
- Although improving, pupils do not make as much progress in learning the letters that sounds make as they could.
- A very small group of parents do not feel their concerns are acted on sufficiently.
- Newly appointed subject leaders now monitor their subjects but are not clear about how they will test their impact on pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The Inspector observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher. All classroom teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching at least once.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils read and discussed with them their reading skills and personal reading record.
- Pupils' work was sampled, the school's tracking records of pupils' progress scrutinised, and account taken of the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, and other documents and policies.
- The views of parents and carers were sought during the two days and the 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were examined.
- The views of staff were sought through a questionnaire and the 18 responses were taken into account.

Inspection team

David Cousins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are of White British heritage and fewer pupils than average are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Higher than average numbers of pupils are supported by additional government funding known as the pupil premium. This is extra funding provided for certain groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' progress, especially in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make), by ensuring that:
 - teachers manage teaching assistants in lessons so that all pupils benefit from the high levels of support provided
 - adults adjust tasks more effectively so that the more-able pupils have sufficiently demanding work throughout all lessons.
- Develop the impact of leadership and management by making sure:
 - the school works more closely with parents so that they respond to their concerns
 - subject leaders develop their skills in monitoring and understanding the school's data for their subject area.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in Reception with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and in personal and social skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and start Year 1 with levels which match the expectations for their age-group but few children exceed these.
- The outcomes to the 2013 phonics test at the end of Year 1 show that pupils' knowledge of the sounds letters make were below average. Current evidence shows that these are improving but are still below average.
- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 in writing and mathematics has been significantly above average for two out of the last three years. Assessment information shows a dip in 2012 because pupils started with very low skills on entry. While they made good progress, they did not all reach the expected standards for their age.
- School data indicates that Year 2 pupils currently in the school have made good progress and many are already attaining the standards expected for their age. Standards in reading are a little lower than mathematics and writing.
- Boys and girls make similar progress, which is an improvement on last year when boys did not do so well. However, a few more-able pupils do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable because activities to challenge them are not always effectively targeted.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to other pupils and a significant number have closed the gaps in their learning so they attain as well as others in their class.
- Pupils enjoy reading and by the end of Year 2 they read a wide range of books. They discuss the choice of new books in the school and are proud of their reading logs. One pupil noted 'Look, I have read this whole book this week' - clearly infected with the 'reading bug'.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding benefit from the additional support for learning that the funding provides. Any gaps between the other pupils and themselves are closing and frequently these pupils attain similar outcomes to others.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because there is a varied range of activities, both indoors and outside, that captures children's interests. Children enjoy themselves and develop skills quickly, particularly in improving their social and personal development when sharing in imaginative play and negotiating taking turns.
- Skilful adults work effectively on, for example, key communication skills. In one session children enthusiastically organised running races and were encouraged to use supportive language and to practise their number skills by creating stickers for the winners.
- Most teaching assistants throughout the school provide effective support for learning but they are not always managed successfully by teachers to make the most of their skills or to move

quickly to support specific groups of pupils without waiting to be directed to do so especially in phonics.

- Strengths in teaching are found in the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers who explain things patiently. Pupils' speaking and listening skills benefit from being able to discuss their ideas and explain their answers to the whole class. Occasionally adults do not intervene when activities are not demanding enough or have been completed and this means that some more-able pupils are not challenged regularly.
- Teachers engage pupils well in learning through interesting activities. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about their work and learning. They want to do well, work hard and so make good progress. In a Year 2 information and communication technology lesson, for example, pupils were given the chance to use programmable toys to practise programming routes for them to follow. This encouraged pupils to discuss their ideas and to use specific language which built on their mathematical understanding of working with co-ordinates.
- Teachers' marking has improved recently. It is done promptly and now helps pupils to understand where they are making progress and where they need to work harder.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They respond well to instructions and low-level disruption in lessons is unusual.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly towards each other and to all adults. They show respect towards the feelings of others and show care and sensitivity towards those pupils who have additional difficulties or find concentrating difficult.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The majority of parents and carers are in agreement that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and say they feel safe in school. They are aware of safety measures when using the internet. They understand different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and are confident that if there are any problems, teachers would swiftly sort out any minor disagreements that arise.
- Careful records show where pupils have not been able to achieve the school's high levels of expectations of behaviour and the actions taken. In many cases these names appear only once or twice showing that the school is effective in its work with individuals.
- Leaders and managers have been effective at improving attendance rates and these are now above average for all groups. Most pupils arrive punctually, wear their school uniform and bring the equipment they need to work in lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is ambitious for the school and has a determination for Tennyson Road to continue to improve. This has been fundamental to the improvements in the school and the good outcomes now enjoyed by pupils.
- Recent improvements in the rigour of termly checks on progress enable leaders and managers to

be clearer about the progress individuals and groups of pupils are making. This has enabled senior leaders to review the effectiveness of the teaching in the school against the progress pupils make.

- Staff training and the allocation of responsibilities are used appropriately to develop the staff's skills and their leadership and management capabilities. Subject leaders, some new to their roles, support the improvement process soundly but are not yet completely comfortable with the interpretation of the data the school now produces.
- Effective levels of co-operation between staff and a keen understanding of the needs for young children mean that the leadership of Early Years and Foundation Stage is good. This creates an exciting, shared space to learn in with focused plans to develop the indoor and outdoor spaces even further.
- Systems to check on the quality of teaching are now well established. These are used to ensure there is a close link between pupils' outcomes and salary progression for teachers. There is a strong link between the targets teachers have and the school development targets. Staff morale is high and they work together well, committed to playing their part in improving the school.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans are clearly focused on continuing to raise pupils' achievement. The local authority has provided the right level of challenge and support and after a period of close scrutiny has now involved the school in some collaborative work with other similar schools to help provide support and training for staff.
- While the majority of parents who responded on Parent View and who spoke to the inspector were positive about the school, a small minority were concerned about aspects of the school and were not sure how effectively the school was tackling these. A newly appointed Parent Support Officer has begun to address these concerns by contacting parents and sourcing funding for work in the school community.
- The school has made good use of the additional funding to improve sports by providing professional coaches, improved teaching equipment and training for staff. As a result the take-up in after-school activities has improved and pupils now say, when asked, they like PE best!
- The school offers a broad range of subjects, and the classrooms and corridors reflect this in interesting displays of pupils' work. Throughout the school, subjects are appropriately planned and designed to reflect pupils' ages and interests. Pupils say they enjoy a good range of visitors who make their learning fun and pupils in Year 2 benefit from a residential journey which helps them to develop improved social skills. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The school successfully promotes equal opportunities at all times. There is no evidence of discrimination through gender, ethnicity, disability or special educational needs.
- Pupils take a lively interest in other cultures. Their contact with a school in Ghana supports this well. They are clear about making right and wrong choices through the staff's careful support for this aspect. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well and visit regularly to see new developments for themselves, talk to pupils, sit in on lessons and look at books. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The governing body receives data on pupils' attainment and progress and

questions leaders carefully to ensure pupils learn well. It is aware of how pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding are supported. The governing body is effectively informed about how performance of staff is managed and how the senior leaders are supporting improvements in teaching. It ensures that pay awards are linked to good performance and the evidence that teachers teach well. It also ensures that safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 121862 |
| Local authority | Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 430720 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 5–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 146 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Lesley Anniwell |
| Headteacher | Caroline Hall |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 July 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01933 314161 |
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