



Twerton Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109007
LEA Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 278099
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005
Reporting inspector Alison Grainger RISP

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Type of school | Infant | School address | Poolmead Road |
| School category | Community | | Twerton |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 | | Bath BA2 1QR |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01225 423 526 |
| Number on roll | 185 | Fax number | 01225 314 745 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | |
| Date of previous inspection | 13 September 1999 | Headteacher | Mr Paul Mattausch Burrows |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its pupils from the Twerton district in the south of Bath. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Just over a tenth are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a few have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is a little below the national average. Almost half the pupils claim free school meals, which is more than in most schools. Overall, children enter the Nursery with attainment well below that expected for their age, particularly in spoken language.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which provides satisfactory value for money. The quality of education is satisfactory for all groups of pupils in all year groups from the Nursery to Year 2.

Overall, pupils progress at much the same rate as other pupils across the country in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Progress is good in writing, but it is too slow in speaking and listening in which standards are too low. Although the writing standards in the end of Year 2 tests have been close to the national average in recent years, the standards in reading and mathematics have been more erratic even though pupils' progress has been satisfactory overall.

There are strengths and also weaknesses in the pupils' personal development and in the care provided for them. The strengths include the pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, and the pastoral care. Weaknesses include the development of pupils' independence, capacity to work in teams, and their involvement in making important decisions. There are also shortcomings in how well pupils develop understanding of the variety of cultural traditions and beliefs of people in Britain today. Despite recent improvement, pupils' attendance rate is too low and too many pupils arrive late at school.

The school sees itself as better than inspectors found it to be. The main reason for this is that it has not looked sharply enough at the effectiveness of all aspects of what it does and how well pupils make progress. Given the rate of improvement in recent years, the school is satisfactorily placed to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards and improve pupils' progress in speaking and listening and also continue to raise standards in reading and mathematics
- improve pupils' independence, capacity to work in teams, involvement in making decisions about the school, and understanding of the variety of cultural traditions and beliefs in modern Britain
- improve pupils' attendance and punctuality
- sharpen the school's self-evaluation of all aspects of its work and of pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's progress is satisfactory overall as they move up from the start of their time in the Nursery to the end of Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities progress as well as others, as do those for whom English is an additional language.

Particularly good gains are made in writing, with pupils doing so well that they reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. This good progress is reflected in the

end of Year 2 test results, which have been close to the national average in recent years.

The test results in reading and mathematics are not as good as in writing. In most years, the results in these two areas have been significantly below the national average, although they were better than this in 2003. They also improved again in 2005 when satisfactorily challenging targets were met following a dip in 2004. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in mathematics is lower than in most schools. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in reading and mathematics.

Throughout the school, progress is insufficient in speaking and listening, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils do not move on well enough to make up for their low skills on entry to the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. There are some good features, particularly pupils' good behaviour and understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils enjoy school, are keen to learn, and get on well with each other and with the adults in school. They know about how to keep healthy and safe and, for example, show a good awareness of others when at play and when moving about the school.

Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community, for example, by diligently carrying out responsibilities as monitors and contributing harvest gifts. Although they make some decisions in lessons, they do not sufficiently learn how to make important decisions such as those that affect the school community. They work well alongside each other and sometimes work together, but do not sufficiently develop their independence, or capacity to work in teams and to solve problems together.

Pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory overall. However, they do not have the expected understanding of the faiths, values and cultural traditions of people from different backgrounds living in Britain. Skills that contribute to pupils' future economic well-being develop satisfactorily overall.

Although there has been improvement in the attendance rate over the last year as a result of action taken, it has remained persistently below the national average since the last inspection. Too many pupils do not arrive promptly in the mornings.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching ensures that all groups of pupils make adequate progress. Lessons are well prepared and organised. Teaching assistants are well deployed, in particular, to give good support to pupils with learning difficulties. The special educational needs

co-ordinator provides good and sensitive support to small groups taken out of class. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are satisfactorily supported.

Positive relationships between adults and pupils support learning well. Teachers' clear instructions and explanations ensure that pupils know what they have to do. As a result, pupils get on quietly and sensibly. However, few opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in lessons in a way that develops independence, initiative and teamwork. Writing is taught well, ensuring good achievement in this area but speaking and listening skills are not given as much attention. Teachers do not do enough to encourage discussion, for example in pairs or groups, either with or without adult involvement.

Overall, activities are satisfactorily matched to the pupils' differing needs. However, on occasions the tasks set for the most capable ones in mathematics are a bit too difficult for them to do without continuous adult support. Similarly, there are times when some of the stronger 'average' pupils have activities that are too easy. These factors contribute to fewer pupils than the national average reaching the higher level in mathematics at the end of Year 2.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets pupils' needs and external requirements satisfactorily. Satisfactory attention is given to all the required subjects in Years 1 and 2 and to the recommended areas of learning for children in the Nursery and Reception Year.

Some good opportunities across the subjects develop pupils' skills as writers, for example in science in Year 2. Within English, interesting and enjoyable activities, such as retelling stories, help pupils to develop their confidence in writing at length.

The school recognises that pupils' speaking and listening skills are weak and has started to give more emphasis to activities, such as role-play, particularly in the Reception Year and Year 1. However, opportunities for pupils to talk and to listen to each other, such as through group problem solving and team activities, are not well enough developed.

Enrichment of day-by-day lessons through visits out and visitors who talk to pupils is satisfactory. Little is provided in the way of clubs, other than a story club last term.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The overall care for pupils makes a satisfactory contribution to their progress. There is good pastoral support and pupils are confident that they have an adult to turn to should the need arise. The school building is a secure, clean and hazard-free environment in which pupils can work and play without fear. Child protection procedures are satisfactory but staff have not been trained to ensure that the procedures are implemented effectively.

Pupils are taught safe practices, for example, about how to use the stairs sensibly, and are taught about the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. School meals encourage healthy eating.

Satisfactory guidance is provided to help pupils to improve their school work through teachers' marking and their individual targets. Pupils with behavioural difficulties also have relevant targets to help them.

An aspect of care that is less well developed than in most schools is the extent to which pupils are consulted and given a voice in the school. Pupils' views are sought occasionally, for example, through a healthy schools questionnaire. However, there is no school council or equivalent means by which they have a regular say, for example, about improving the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school ensure that pupils receive a satisfactory standard of education. In particular the headteacher and staff succeed in creating a safe environment for pupils in which there is good behaviour. They also successfully ensure that parents feel welcome and valued. Parents are pleased with the school and how it looks after their children.

The headteacher and staff are committed to improving the school and have correctly identified some of the main areas in which development is now required. For example, when the end of Year 2 test results dipped in 2004, they sought the reasons for this and dealt with them. However, the school's evaluation of its effectiveness is not sufficiently sharp and, as a result, the headteacher has judged the school to be better than it is.

Although the headteacher knows where teaching is strongest and where it needs improvement, leaders and managers at all levels are not rigorously enough focused on getting the satisfactory teaching up to a better standard. For example, the school knows that speaking and listening standards require improvement, but the aspects of teaching that prevent better standards have not been well enough identified. Whilst the strengths in pupils' personal development and in the care and guidance have been recognised, the shortcomings have not.

Governance is satisfactory overall. Governors know the school's main strengths and weaknesses. However, they rely too much on the headteacher to keep them informed and are better at supporting the school than challenging its senior managers. In the light of the school's satisfactory track record of improvement, the capacity for further development is satisfactory.

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Inspection judgements

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|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 3 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 3 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 4 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 3 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | No |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | No |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | No |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Twerton Infant School Poolemead Road Twerton Bath BA2 1QR

8th October 2005

Dear Children,

Thank you for helping the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you. We are pleased that you like school. You are doing well with your writing and we really enjoyed reading your stories.

You behave well and are very sensible when you play on the playground and move about the school. We were very impressed by your good behaviour at the harvest assembly and pleased to see so many mothers and fathers there. We are pleased that you get on well with each other and with the adults who look after you.

There are some things that your school could do to help you more. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to work in groups and teams and to speak and listen to each other. We think it would be good if you could be more involved in decisions about how the school could be better. We also think you would find it interesting to learn more about people from different backgrounds who live in Britain.

We think that your attendance could be better and that you could do more to get to school on time in the mornings. We would like you and your parents to help the school to improve this.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to look more carefully at all the things that the school does to see what could be better. This will help the school to make sure that it always does its best for you.

Alison Grainger

On behalf of the inspectors