



Taxal and Fernilee Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112872
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 279041
Inspection dates 6 June 2006 to 7 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Simpson LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Reddish Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		SK23 7DL
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01663733262
Number on roll	182	Fax number	01663719295
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Eileen O'Sullivan
Date of previous inspection	27 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Yvette Jeffrey

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Taxal and Fernilee Church of England Controlled Primary School is a smaller than average school on the outskirts of the small town of Whaley Bridge. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of the pupils who are entitled to free school meals, have statements of special educational needs or have learning difficulties or disabilities are below the national average. Since the last inspection an additional classroom has been built. However, the number of pupils on roll has also risen significantly. Class sizes in Key Stage 2 are reduced for English and mathematics by using the hall as an additional classroom.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Taxal and Fernilee is a school which is distinguished by the positive attitudes of the pupils and their care for one another. The quality of self-evaluation is good and the inspectors agree with the school that its overall effectiveness is good. The headteacher has established a calm, purposeful atmosphere in which all parts of the school community contribute to school improvement and the high achievement of pupils is a priority. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average standards and as a result of the good provision which is reflected in careful assessment, creative teaching and a good appreciation of the individual needs of pupils, a higher than average proportion of them gain the early learning goals. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and generally attain well above average standards. Teaching and learning are good. Where teaching is most effective lessons are pacy, teachers have high expectations and tasks are well structured to help pupils learn independently and to take part in group activities. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not always fully exploit opportunities to check prior learning, and questioning does not probe pupils' understanding deeply enough, and as a consequence progress is less swift. The school is creative in having additional staffing and using the hall as an extra classroom, but accommodation is cramped for the number of pupils on roll, which at times restricts learning opportunities. The curriculum is good and the use of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities is a strength of the school. Teachers make effective links between subjects, which strengthen the pupils' understanding. The pupils' personal development and well-being are good as a result of the strong commitment throughout the school to ensure the pupils become caring and tolerant individuals. The quality of care is good overall, although the headteacher is aware of the need for formal training in child protection to further strengthen provision. Leadership and management are good. The school has set challenging targets but is aware that its thorough procedures for monitoring pupil progress need to be more rigorously moderated to ensure that any underachievement is quickly addressed. The school has improved since the last inspection, provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure child protection training is completed. - Address the limitations to teaching and learning caused by the school having insufficient accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. - Moderate teacher assessments of pupil attainment to ensure that good or better progress is maintained.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Children enter the school with a wide range of attainment. By the end of Reception attainment is above average and is particularly strong in personal and social development. All pupils make good progress throughout

the school. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been consistently well above average in recent years. Whilst results in Key Stage 2 tests in 2005 were in line with national averages, current attainment in Years 3 to 6 is well above average. Action has been taken to address the previous underachievement of boys and consequently their performance has improved. The school has set exacting targets for individual pupils which are monitored each term. A large proportion of pupils are meeting these high expectations although the school recognises the need to ensure that teacher assessment is always accurate and consistent in order to sustain high expectations throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They are most effective ambassadors for their school. They are well behaved and their attendance is good. Most thoroughly enjoy coming to school and extra-curricular activities are very well supported. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils develop good self-awareness and self-esteem; they make sensible suggestions for prayers to be said in assembly and reflect quietly on suggested topics. The school's 'Golden Rules' are respected and adhered to. In class, pupils work well individually, in groups and in teams. Older pupils are delighted to take on responsibilities such as 'buddying' new arrivals or acting as playground peacemakers. Pupils say that the latter have improved playtime relationships considerably. Visitors are warmly welcomed. Pupils develop tolerance of human differences and respect for cultural traditions. In their own art work they are inspired by the creations of well known artists. The school council takes its work seriously; suggestions are acted upon and so pupils have a stake in the running of the school. They also contribute to the local community when the choir entertains others or when pupils work together to raise funds for charities. Most have a good understanding of what constitutes healthy living, although not all make healthy choices at lunchtimes. Physical activities are popular, and on Sports Day pupils compete in mixed age teams. Teamwork is also well developed through adventurous activities. Together with the good development of basic skills, such qualities prepare pupils well for future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use secure assessment to plan their lessons, so activities are pitched at the right level for all pupils. Tasks offer a challenge as well as opportunities to experience success; they also appeal to pupils who say that they enjoy most lessons. The good quality of relationships helps staff to manage pupils well. As a result, pupils are engaged and productive throughout lessons. In most lessons a good pace is maintained, often by timing tasks, which gives pupils a sense of urgency. However, the cramped conditions do restrict some learning activities. For example,

the progress of pupils in a science lesson was slowed because of the difficulties of moving safely around the classroom while conducting experiments and observing a demonstration. Teaching assistants often contribute well by taking small groups themselves. Teaching promotes pupils' personal development well. For instance, safe and sensible learning behaviour is encouraged and well rewarded. Lessons also include activities that enable pupils to learn through all their senses. Good use is made of short physical activities to regain the pupils' attention when they begin to flag. Information and communication technology is used well as a teaching and learning tool. Pupils are assessed thoroughly when they arrive, and suitable tests are used subsequently to check pupils' attainment levels. Teachers maintain good records which enable staff to identify those that need additional support. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the start of each lesson, but are not all equally good at reviewing these afterwards. The school has identified this as an area for further development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good: it is exciting and engaging, as the school intends. All the required subjects are taught and in Years 3 to 6 pupils all learn Spanish. The curriculum is particularly rich. Through constructive links with parents and the local and international community, pupils experience a very good range of visits and visitors, who bring learning to life. A link with a school in Poland is particularly popular with pupils. Residential school visits for pupils from Year 4 upwards encourage greater independence, widen pupils' horizons, and provide a range of challenging adventurous activities. There is also a good range of extra-curricular clubs. The good quality programme of personal, social and health education contributes well to personal development. There are too few classrooms for pupils to be taught in year groups. A few parents are concerned that pupils miss work or repeat topics when they remain in a class for two years but teachers plan carefully to make sure that this does not happen.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect is good; it is underpinned well by the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe in the school and are confident that there is someone to turn to. Well developed links with parents, schools and external agencies contribute to good arrangements for induction and transition, as well as support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities or those who have particular gifts or talents. There is very good guidance to help pupils develop personal qualities, such as assertiveness. Academic guidance is satisfactory; pupils have personal targets to work towards in reading and writing, and there are suitable plans to extend this practice to mathematics. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory. Supervision is good. Risks are carefully assessed and suitable action taken to minimise these. Suitable checks are carried out before staff are appointed. Although the child protection coordinator has

received basic training and has provided briefings for all staff, she has yet to undertake the required substantial course.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has established an effective senior management team who have a good knowledge of the school and effectively monitor its work. School improvement planning is systematic, is based on good evaluation of areas for development, and appropriately takes into account the views of members of the school community. The school is in the process of revising some of its policies, such as learning and teaching, which provides a timely opportunity to affirm the features of best practice. Subject leaders play an increasingly important role in monitoring standards and identifying links with other curriculum areas. The governing body have high expectations for the school and have established a good range of procedures to monitor and challenge its work, for example, visit classrooms and individual governors are attached to specific areas such as health and safety or numeracy. The school is improving and has the capacity to continue to do so.

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
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	Yes
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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We learned a lot about it through talking to you, seeing how you were getting on in your lessons and sharing your assembly and sports day. We could see that you enjoy your education, work enthusiastically and care for one another. Well done! Yours is a school with many strengths, not least your good behaviour and keenness to learn. The adults who work in your school know you well and care that you make good progress and are well looked after. The peer mediation stop and friends meeting point on the playground are very good examples of the way that you look after one another. You have lots of excellent opportunities to go on visits which help your learning, for example to Lyme Park and you also benefit from visitors who share their enthusiasms with you, for example, about vintage cars. Also, you get the chance to be involved in a wide range of activities, including the choir going to perform at a local supermarket and for pensioners. Everyone at the school still wants your education to be even better. I have asked Mrs Jeffrey to do a few things that should help you all get on even better than you are doing now! I've suggested that your teachers make sure that you continue to make good progress in every year that you're at Taxal and Fernilee by comparing their assessments of your work, seeing if the school can find ways to reduce the number of times you are taught in large classes and ensuring that child protection training is up to date so that your welfare is even better looked after. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.