



Townhill Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116134
LEA Southampton LEA
Inspection number 279757
Inspection dates 26 September 2005 to 27 September 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Mike Thompson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Benhams Road
School category	Community		Townhill Park
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Southampton, Hampshire SO18 2NX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	2380473611
Number on roll	400	Fax number	2380476991
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr K Batchelor

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Townhill Junior is a larger than average sized school, which serves an area of social deprivation to the north of the centre of Southampton. Most of its pupils are of white British heritage. A small number of pupils come from homes in which other languages are spoken. However, almost all of these pupils are as competent in communicating in English as many of their classmates. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average for a school of this size. Over the past few years, the attainment levels at which pupils enter the school have declined, and are now below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a very good and effective school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. Parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their views are fully justified. The quality of education, including teaching, is good. From a lower than average starting point, pupils achieve average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. The large numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make very good progress. This happens because their individual needs are quickly identified and met, and the school works well in partnership with their parents. All other pupils make good progress. The school is working hard to improve the rate of progress made by its pupils. It recognises that this can be more easily achieved by making sure that teachers have more information about how well their pupils have done in previous years. The good standard of pupils' personal development contributes strongly to the very good climate for learning in all classes. Pupils are well cared for and feel secure and happy. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. A highly committed staff team gives him good support. Together, they have developed very good systems for monitoring and checking on the effectiveness of the school. The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and has devised a clear plan for the further development of the school. The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1999. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement at all levels, leaving the school well placed to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Update the formal procedures and training for child protection. * Apply the systems for checking pupils' progress more consistently throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their levels of competence in English and mathematics are generally below average. From this starting point, pupils make good progress as they move through the school, with boys and girls achieving equally well. The school's success in developing pupils' knowledge and skills is largely due to good teaching. Pupils with special needs make very good progress. This is because the school is good at identifying their specific learning difficulties and gives them a lot of very good quality help. In each year group, pupils are given challenging goals to achieve, and their progress in meeting them is closely monitored. This process is particularly rigorous in Year 6. Here, the teacher in charge of the year group closely analyses the results of tests in English, mathematics and science to identify pupils' individual needs. This information is then used to set individual targets linked to national curriculum levels and to pick out those who need extra help. For this reason, pupils in this year group make very good progress. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils generally make

good use of their skills in information and communication technology to help them in their work. For instance, Year 6 pupils have used software which enables them to report the story of Macbeth in a newspaper format.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Standards of pupils' social development are very good. Their moral development is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The school is a very orderly and hardworking community in which pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils make good use of their social and academic skills in their day-to-day lives. These skills also provide a good platform for continued progress when pupils move to their secondary schools. Pupils' excellent behaviour and their real enthusiasm for learning are important reasons as to why they do well. Pupils are confident, extremely polite and courteous. They are very good at carrying out responsible jobs which they are given, such as taking turns to be librarians. However, they are not always given enough opportunities to show initiative in contributing to the life of the school and their own learning. The school is aware of this and has clear plans for the establishment of a school council to give pupils a greater say in day-to-day matters. Pupils have a good understanding of British cultural traditions, but not of the wide range of different cultural traditions outside their immediate community. Pupils are involved in the life of the wider community through the school's links with local sports clubs and its participation in local festivals. Attendance rates are close to the national average, and most pupils arrive punctually.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Particularly noteworthy is the quality of relationships between pupils and all adults in the school. These very good relationships contribute strongly to pupils' excellent behaviour in lessons and their very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given high quality help. Teachers' planning takes full account of these pupils' individual learning needs. As a result, the work they are given is both challenging and achievable. At the start of each lesson, teachers always tell their pupils what they intend them to learn. However, some teachers do not always explain this clearly enough. At the end of lessons, teachers are skilled in reviewing what everyone has done. This helps pupils to reflect on how well they are getting on and learn from one another. Teachers are also skilled in using questions to find out how well pupils are learning. For example, a teacher in a Year 4 class asked pupils to imagine that they were wartime evacuees. Some pupils then answered questions from their classmates about how they felt. The quality of these questions and answers helped the teacher to judge how well pupils understood what they had been taught. The school recognizes that it does not make best use of

information gathered about pupils' previous performance, for example, in reading. Much of this is stored on a computer program, but is not yet fully available to staff.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a wide range of activities to interest and meet the needs of its pupils. A particularly good feature is the emphasis placed on promoting pupils' healthy lifestyles and social skills through sport. This is further developed through a wide range of after-school clubs, which also include other subjects such as music and drama. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in whole school events, such as the eagerly anticipated Christmas concert. One parent commented: 'We are invited to a slickly produced Christmas show with every child taking part, and the teachers joining in with unbridled enthusiasm'. The school is starting to plan good links between subjects to make learning more relevant and purposeful. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very good. These pupils have clear personal education plans, which are carefully used to make sure that they achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with parents' views that the school is very good at looking after their children and providing a secure place in which they can learn. At the heart of this is the good quality of day-to-day care given to all pupils. School staff know pupils' personal needs very well. Pupils readily comment on how happy and secure they feel. They are very confident that they can approach staff with their concerns and that any problems will be promptly dealt with. Health and safety requirements are properly met and child protection procedures are effective. Children identified as being at risk are very well looked after. However, the quality of written policies and procedures is not as good as the practice that they underpin. Formal training in child protection for staff and governors has not been updated. The school makes good use of the expertise provided by a broad range of outside professional agencies, and seeks advice as appropriate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's leadership is very good. He knows the school very well and makes very good use of information gathered through his regular monitoring to guide its development effectively. He has ensured that the curriculum contains a wide variety of activities so that all pupils can find something in which they can be successful. Teachers monitor their areas of responsibility well and use the information which they gather to make useful contributions to the school's improvement. The evaluations made by the headteacher and his staff are thorough and accurate. They are used well to set challenging targets for the school's performance. The headteacher has a very good staff team, and deploys them very effectively. There is a clear sense of shared

purpose to ensure that pupils do well and are fully included in activities. There are good opportunities for staff training, closely linked to their individual responsibilities and the school's priorities set out in its clear improvement plan. Very good use is made of the building and the grounds provide a stimulating learning environment. Governance is satisfactory. Governors care about their school and adequately hold it to account. They provide useful support for school initiatives and ensure that legal responsibilities are met.

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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	NA	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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	2	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?	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	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	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

Following our visit to your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave really well and get on well with each other. * You listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and try very hard in your lessons. * Your teachers teach you well, and when you find work hard you are given the right sort of help. * Your teachers work hard to organise lots of extra things for you to do. * All of the adults in your school make sure that you are safe and are well looked after. * Your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are good at making sure that you get the very best education.

We agree with your parents that you go to a very good school. All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this we think that the things to do next are: * improve the ways that teachers check on how well you are doing; * make sure that all adults in your school keep up to date with their training in ways to look after you.