



# Tanners Wood Junior Mixed and Infant School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 117178  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280005  
**Inspection dates** 20 June 2006 to 21 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Linda Killman HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hazelwood Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		WD5 0LG
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 262229
<b>Number on roll</b>	379	<b>Fax number</b>	01923 269631
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs.Mandy Howe
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Michael Lansdown

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 20 June 2006 - 21 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280005
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The pupils have mixed social and economic backgrounds. Children start school in the Nursery with the level of skills usually expected for their age. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Most of the pupils are White British. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has recently risen to 8%. Of these, a minority speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school's leadership and management are new since January 2005, following the retirement of the previous headteacher after twenty years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The view shared by the school and the inspectors is that this is a good school providing good quality education for its pupils. From an average starting point pupils make good progress and by the time they leave Tanners Wood, standards are above average in mathematics and science and exceptionally high in English. This is because of the mainly good or better teaching and the rich curriculum that adds interest, enjoyment and excitement to learning. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching because planning is not always sufficiently clear. The best teaching is exemplified by precise planning, high expectations and brisk pace that energises learning. The school recognises that improvement is needed in tracking the progress pupils make to ensure that they achieve as much as they can. Pupils are well cared for but a more systematic approach is required to health and safety checks. The school is well led and managed and runs smoothly. The new leadership team have an honest, realistic and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Change that leads to further improvement is actively encouraged but new ways of working are not evaluated with sufficient rigour. Governance is effective in moving the school forward. The school provides good value for money. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Refine daily lesson plans with improved precision about what teachers intend children to learn in every lesson. - Increase effectiveness in using assessment information and data to systematically and rigorously track all pupils' progress and adjust their targets accordingly. - Sharpen the focus of school evaluation and improvement planning to identify clearer targets and measure the impact of projects on learning. - Build routine checks of teaching areas into the school's existing risk assessment procedures.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' standard of attainment and achievement are good overall. Good or better teaching in most classes as well as a curriculum that enables pupils to relate their learning to everyday life add to pupils' enjoyment and subsequent achievement. From an average starting point pupils make good progress and most achieve the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the Reception class. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1 with most seven-year-olds achieving the national average of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was lower than average in 2005 but the school's evidence shows a distinct improvement in 2006. However, systems for analysing data and other information are not used effectively enough to ensure that all pupils' targets are sufficiently challenging. There is marked acceleration in the rate of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6. By the age of 11, pupils' standards of attainment are above average in mathematics and science and exceptionally high in English. Above average numbers

of pupils exceed national expectations in these subjects. The school met its challenging targets in 2005.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. They are proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy coming to it. Last year attendance was just above average and the school is taking all the steps it can to further improve it. Pupils behave very well especially when lessons have a brisk pace. They play constructively together in the exceptionally spacious grounds, and older pupils care for and support younger ones. Pupils know right from wrong and say that instances of bullying are uncommon. Any racist comments are noted and dealt with swiftly on the rare occasions they occur. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide opportune moments for reflection, although an act of collective worship is not always included. Pupils visit the local church and learn about festivals and practices of Christianity and other religions. There are opportunities to learn about non-European cultures, for example during an arts week, but these are more limited. Pupils show a keen awareness of keeping healthy through eating and exercise, encouraged by a wide range of physical activities, including competitive sport. They contribute well to their local community, raising money for local causes, as well as taking part with their own float in the Abbots Langley carnival. The basic skills that pupils need for future life are developed well.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. All teachers form good relationships with pupils making them confident learners. Most lessons are well structured with a good variety of activities to keep them interested. Questioning is often probing to push pupils to explain their thinking. The best lessons move along at a bracing pace. In these lessons pupils work purposefully because they are told exactly what they are learning and why and how to check that they are on track to succeed. In contrast, in a smaller number of satisfactory lessons, expectations are not high enough. In addition, either planning is insufficiently precise in setting clear goals for the lesson or a lack of pace allows pupils to coast. Teachers use 'talking partners' well to involve all pupils in discussions to develop their speaking and listening skills. Good use of the interactive whiteboards captures pupils' interest, adding to their enjoyment. Teaching assistants provide unobtrusive and effective support for children who have difficulties with aspects of their work. An increasing emphasis on pupils assessing the quality of their own work is developing their awareness of how to be successful learners. However, some pupils are vague about their longer-term targets and unsure of what they aiming for.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Appropriate emphasis is given to all subjects and the development of skills, in particular in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Personal, social and emotional development has a high priority, leading to good behaviour and respect for others. Themes linking subjects are used well to deepen pupils' understanding. Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language make good progress without specific support due to generally effective teaching. In the Foundation Stage a well-planned curriculum provides children with a good start to their education. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves to develop their independence. Resources for ICT are good in contrast to the poor library provision. Not enough thought is given to displaying quality books in an inviting way to tempt pupils to browse and read. Visiting speakers and trips to places of interest enrich the curriculum. During the inspection, a Viking Day brought history to life for Year 4 and the Reception classes visited Syon Park to study minibeasts. The extensive clubs programme is popular with pupils, adding to their enjoyment of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school cares well for its pupils. They feel safe in school and know that there is someone they can turn to if they are in difficulty. Child protection procedures are in place. Risk assessments are made for visits and other off-site activities but health and safety checks of teaching spaces are not frequent enough to reduce potential risks for pupils as they go about their daily work. Teachers' marking gives pupils good guidance on how they can improve. Pupils understand clearly the targets they have for improving punctuation, but the school acknowledges the need to make greater use of assessment information to set challenging targets in other areas. Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and for a significant minority who need support with their behaviour. The school has a strong programme of personal, social and health education that includes personal safety, sex and relationships education and teaching about the misuse of drugs. Arrangements for induction into the school and transfer to local secondary schools are good.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, shares a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has an adequate improvement plan that focuses on raising standards and the well-being of pupils. However, the school's self-evaluation does not give sufficient consideration to the effect that new ways of working have on learners' achievement. The recent introduction of a new leadership structure with clearer roles and responsibilities is

bearing fruit. The strong leadership is generating a dedicated, enthusiastic team spirit, enabling staff to embrace change and drive standards up. The school is aware that greater rigour in analysis of the school's data and other assessment information is required to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored and evaluated to check the quality and to improve practice. Governance is good, providing a suitable balance of support and challenge. Secure financial management has enabled the school to make a start in tackling much needed refurbishment of the school's jaded and dated interior but there is still a long way to go. The views of parents and pupils are welcomed. Parents say that the school, 'Encourages a lot of family involvement and has a good community spirit.' The vast majority of parents appreciate all that the school does for their children. Good progress has been made on development points raised in the previous inspection and the leadership and management effectively contribute to the school's capacity to improve further.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

We enjoyed our visit to your school. We learned a great deal about your school by talking to you and watching you learn. We thought that you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could get even better. - You made us all feel very welcome and greeted us warmly with a smile. - You thoroughly enjoy coming to school because you really like your teachers and there are many exciting things to look forward to such as visits and visitors. - You all get on well together and behave well. - You are good learners and work hard. - Every year that you are at the school, you make good progress. - You have a huge, well kept outdoor space to learn and play in. All of the adults work hard to make sure that you do the best you can. What we have asked the school to do now to make it even better is to. - Make sure that you know exactly what you are learning in each lesson and why. - Check that your targets are challenging enough for you. - Consider if new ways of working are improving your learning. - Regularly check that the school is a hazard free zone. On Midsummer's Day it was satisfying to leave your school knowing that it is a good school. We took with us memories of some of you dressed up as Vikings and all of you having great fun on the field keeping fit! We wish you all the best in the future.