



# Thorpe Acre Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119958  
**LEA** Leicestershire  
**Inspection number** 280697  
**Inspection dates** 10 October 2005 to 10 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Lois Furness RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Alan Moss Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Loughborough
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		Leicestershire LE11 4SQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01509 212021
<b>Number on roll</b>	120	<b>Fax number</b>	01509 212021
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mari Street

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 October 2005 - 10 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280697
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Thorpe Acre Infant School is a small school in Loughborough, Leicestershire. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals is higher than usual but there are fewer pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Most pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Before the arrival of the new headteacher in 2004, the school experienced an unsettled period with a change in the staffing profile, a proposed amalgamation with the adjacent junior school and falling rolls (falling to 120 children in 2004). The school gained the Active Sportsmark in 2004.

## 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 that provides satisfactory value for money. This is a view shared by the school. Provision for children in the Reception classes is good. Children make good progress in these classes, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, and mathematical development because of good teaching. By the time they leave Reception, standards remain below that expected, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. Although standards by Year 2 in reading and writing are below those expected for their age, but not exceptionally low, pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in mathematics are broadly average and progress is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with particular strengths in building positive relationships and in the use of praise which makes pupils feel good about themselves. However, the information teachers gather and give to pupils about what they are learning, and about how to improve their work, is not sufficiently clear to set effectively challenging targets. Pupils' personal development is good, they enjoy coming to school and are well cared for and are given good guidance and support. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has made good improvement since 2004. The headteacher, subject leaders and governors know the strengths and areas for development well so that the school is in a good position to improve further.

Grade: 3

### What the school should do to improve further

- improve the pupils' reading and writing skills
- embed the tracking and target setting systems to ensure that teachers plan work which challenges the pupils more
- involve pupils in knowing more clearly what they are learning and how they might improve their work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Starting from a low level of basic skills, especially in communication, language and literacy, the children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. In personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development, the majority of children do particularly well. By the time they leave Reception, standards are broadly average. However, in communication, language and literacy, despite good progress, standards remain below average.

In 2004, standards attained by Year 2 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average. A high number of pupils attained the higher level in all three subjects. Achievement was good and challenging targets were exceeded. The school says the results were unusually high as these pupils were a particularly able group. In 2005, standards declined and were more comparable to the standards attained in 2002 and 2003. However, there was high inward mobility with this group of pupils and the majority of pupils joining the Year 2 group had difficulties in learning. As a

result, standards in 2005 were below the national average in reading and writing. Assessment data shows that achievement was satisfactory with evidence of some good achievement for more able pupils. In mathematics, standards were broadly average and progress was good. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English make satisfactory progress. Overall, standards by the end of Year 2 are below average but not exceptionally so. Grade: 3

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes towards their work. Parents confirm this view. Attendance is lower than the national average but is slowly improving. Relationships are good and pupils are confident that there is someone to help them if they have a concern or feel unsafe. Behaviour is mainly good but there are a small number of pupils in each class who occasionally do not behave as well as they should. The new school council is giving pupils the opportunity to voice their opinions and to help to improve the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide good opportunities to consider social, moral and cultural issues and include time for reflection and prayer. Pupils think about those less fortunate than themselves and have raised funds for charitable causes. They visit interesting places and visitors, such as the African drummer, Waldo, make them inquisitive about other cultures. Pupils know the importance of healthy lifestyles and are keen to eat more healthy foods and do regular exercise. Pupils' skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them satisfactorily for life in the future. However, their literacy skills are in need of improvement. Grade: 2

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good with a particular emphasis on how well children settle into school and get on with other children. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have good relationships with pupils and praise is used well resulting in pupils feeling valued and being confident to learn. The new interactive whiteboards are used effectively in the classroom to stimulate interest and create greater enthusiasm. Teachers have satisfactory questioning skills which they use to encourage pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils take part in question and answer sessions. This results in loss of concentration and some restless behaviour. In lessons, pupils are not always clear about what they are expected to learn and the feedback given by the teachers does not always clearly indicate what is good about their work and how they might improve. This sometimes leads to lesson planning that is not matched to what all the pupils need to learn next. Grade: 3

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school provides a good range of additional activities that enhance what is on offer to the pupils and they speak excitedly about projects, such as 'princes and princesses'. Activities such as the choir, sport and chess really help the pupils to enjoy and learn more. The effective teaching of personal, social and health education enables the pupils to challenge any abuse they may encounter. They are confident to use the strategy of 'Stop it - I don't like it' and they say that it helps them to get over any incidents of bullying. The school is working hard towards integrating subjects to make learning more meaningful for all pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English are supported well with work tailored to their individual needs. Grade: 3

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for and there are good procedures for health and safety. Therefore, pupils are able to work safely and are happy to come to school. All staff know the pupils well and social development is promoted sensitively. Pupils are confident when communicating with adults and know that their contributions are valued. Child protection procedures are secure. Vulnerable pupils and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly, and supported carefully, gaining in confidence and knowing they are safe. The school works successfully with organisations such as the social services to help these pupils, as well as those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Induction procedures for children when they first start at school are good, resulting in them settling quickly into school routines. Good links with the receiving junior school makes the transition smooth. Grade: 2

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear steer to the school and she has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. The newly established governing body is satisfactorily involved and is developing their strategic role. They ensure legal requirements are met. Parents and governors are very supportive and share the headteacher's vision for the school. Parents' views are sought and acted upon and their contribution is valued. Involving pupils more in school improvement is at an early stage, with the recent setting up of a school council.

The school improvement plan is a detailed document which provides a good basis for further improvement. The targets identified are clearly focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and ICT. Subject leaders are involved and have good action plans in place to support developments. There are regular checks to see how well

lessons are taught and how well pupils learn. The information gained from this is used well to develop the teachers' skills. Data analysis is thorough and a good tracking and target setting system has been recently introduced. Now all teachers have good information about what pupils know and understand and what it is necessary to teach them to raise the quality of their work. As yet, this system has not had sufficient time to make an improvement to standards. The headteacher has done much to establish a culture of support and challenge. The school is well placed to improve further. Grade: 3

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	4	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	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>	3	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	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

<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	NA
<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**

11 October 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work.

What we liked most about your school:

The staff in the Reception classes make a special effort to make sure you settle well into school and feel happy and safe.

That you like school a lot and learning is fun.

The school is good at taking care of you and you know who to turn to if you have a problem.

You enjoy using the new interactive whiteboards in your classrooms.

You know which foods are healthy and why you should have regular exercise.

What we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

We would like you to improve your skills in reading and writing.

We have asked the teachers to use the information they have about what you know already, to plan work that makes you think hard.

We have asked your teachers to tell you more about what you are learning and how you might improve your work.

Thank you again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Furness (lead inspector)