



Tower View Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124046
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281613
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Patricia Davies RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Vancouver Drive Winhill
School category	Community		Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE15 0EZ
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01283 239123
Number on roll	392	Fax number	01283 239127
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Karen Kirby
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr Peter Mallard

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 October 2005 - 20 October 2005	Inspection number 281613
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Tower View is a large primary school, serving an area of some disadvantage. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Those from minority ethnic groups speak English competently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. These pupils have a wide range of needs, including behavioural difficulties. An extensive range of care and family facilities is available on the school's site, including a breakfast club and pre-school. There has been a significant turnover of staff in the last few years, including senior staff. When children join the Reception classes their attainment is below the expected levels.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Tower View currently gives its pupils a sound education, and is improving. This is the school's view too, and the accuracy of this judgement reflects the close look it takes at its performance. Despite the disruptions to staffing in recent years, very strong senior leadership has created a climate where all staff willingly look at how well they are doing, and are eager to do better. Improvement has been tackled robustly on a range of fronts, but the school's work still varies in quality so that it is not yet consistently good. For example, pupils' progress is satisfactory as a whole, with areas of good and very good achievement. The quality of education in the Reception class is good, and these children achieve well. The school's outstanding pastoral care is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm and good behaviour. All these factors indicate that the school is well placed to move forward.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Much attention has been given to the accuracy and use of assessment, but pupils do not always get enough feedback on how they could improve. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been improved, particularly for teaching English and mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils have only a limited understanding of other cultures. Governors are increasingly evaluating the school's work but are not yet fully contributing to the school's development. Bearing all these factors in mind, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- consistently give pupils feedback on how they can improve their work
- increase governors' active involvement in evaluating and influencing the school's performance
- strengthen pupils' awareness and understanding of cultures other than their own.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement as a whole is satisfactory, and standards are broadly average by the time they leave the school. Children make good progress in the Reception classes, so that their attainment is broadly average when they join Year 1. Pupils' work shows that they achieve satisfactorily thereafter because progress is not yet consistently good across Years 1 to 6. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make sound progress. However, pupils with a high level of social and emotional need have made rapid progress in response to intensive support.

Signs of gradual, but steady improvement to national test results in the last two years illustrate the school's determination to increase academic performance. Targets are challenging. Analysis of national test results led the school to focus on improving writing and increasing the attainment of the more able. The 2005 tests for Year 6 pupils show these initiatives have reaped some success, with the most significant increases at the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and science. Attention has also turned to mathematics. There was a modest overall increase in the 2005 mathematics

test results, and improvements to the teaching of mathematics are now having a conspicuous influence, particularly in Year 6 where pupils of all abilities achieve well in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. The school has successfully created a climate in which all can enjoy learning. The support for pupils with challenging behaviour has been particularly fruitful and these pupils are well integrated. A firm foundation is established in the Reception classes where children develop good personal and social skills. In other classes too, pupils behave well. They are friendly, confident and fair with others, and show mutual respect. Working together helps to develop skills for later life, as does the increasingly effective emphasis given to basic literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils talk knowledgeably about how to stay safe, and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a real contribution to school life through the school council.

Attendance is good. Pupils like coming to school, and most have a thirst for learning. Practical activities, in particular, engage the attention of lower attaining pupils, and those who find it more difficult to concentrate. Pupils say they enjoy the range of clubs and interesting visits. These experiences contribute well to pupils' cultural awareness. Such activities have increasingly had a multicultural theme, but have not yet had enough impact on pupils' understanding of cultures beyond their own. Sensitivity towards issues within the wider community is well developed through charity work, especially pupils' support for cancer research.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching is improving due to the opportunities teachers are given to think carefully about lessons and try out new ideas. However, good teaching is not yet consistent throughout the school. Work is generally well matched to pupils' attainment, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils know the purpose of their work and their achievements are increasingly discussed with them at the end of lessons. Teachers make lessons interesting with practical and problem solving activities. Improvements have made a considerable difference to the teaching of mathematics. However, sometimes pupils become fidgety because low-level restlessness is not nipped in the bud, or overlong discussions try their patience.

The best marking identifies how pupils can improve their work, but this approach is not used consistently. Consequently, some pupils say they are not sure how best to make progress. The accuracy of assessment is improving and enabling teachers to set challenging targets for English and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in learning is being used with increasing success to plan work for pupils of different capabilities. This is resulting in steadily rising standards. For example, particular mathematical skills are being targeted, and there are greater opportunities for writing at length, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Good improvement is evident in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection, and the provision for science is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The quality of visits and the range of extra-curricular clubs bring a sparkle to learning. Creative efforts are made to apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. This was true in history, for instance, where pupils produced authentic looking advertisements for the crew on Drake's ship, the Santa Maria. The curriculum also gives some insights into other cultures. However, as yet these are having too little impact on pupils' knowledge.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care and support for its pupils are good. Pastoral care is outstanding. There is an extensive range of support groups for pupils with personal and learning difficulties. These groups do much to raise pupils' self-confidence and their capability to make academic progress. The involvement of outside agencies to support vulnerable children and families, and others with a wide range of needs, is highly effective. There is good liaison with services on the site. Arrangements for child protection are well established. Individual educational plans for those with learning difficulties and disabilities are clear and helpful. Parents are involved well in seeking improvement for their children.

The help and guidance given for pupils to improve their academic work is satisfactory. Where marking is good pupils are helped to think more deeply about their work. However, the inconsistencies in approaches to marking result in some pupils being unclear about how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since the headteacher's arrival four years ago, the school has faced some difficult circumstances. There has been a significant turnover of teachers, and problems recruiting staff. Key staff roles have also been affected, and a senior manager was absent while supporting another school. Nevertheless, the headteacher and senior team have set about securing improvement across all areas of the school's work. Staff at all levels have been empowered to take on leadership roles, and encouraged to reflect on their effectiveness. They do this openly and enthusiastically.

Analysis and review are now integral to the school's work, so that the school knows itself well. Some aspects of the senior team's work with individual staff have been very effective, particularly in tackling shortcomings in teaching. There is careful deployment of staff to where they can be most effective. The views of pupils and parents are actively sought. Extensive pastoral work has played a major part in creating a climate where pupils can flourish. These factors have secured the right conditions for the early signs of sustained academic achievement. The school is now well placed to move forward. Parents expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Governance is satisfactory. With support and guidance from senior staff, governors are now playing a greater role in evaluating the school's performance, but recognise they have more to do to ensure that they contribute fully to the school's growing improvement.

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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?	3	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?	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?	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	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

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?	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	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	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 letting us visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you, watching you learn and looking at your work. We thought you would like to hear what we liked about your school and how it could get even better.

What we liked about your school:

• You are friendly and confident, and happy to talk about what you were doing. • You behave well and enjoy what you do, especially when you are working together or have practical activities to do. • Your teachers and other members of staff go to great lengths to look after you and make sure that everyone behaves well and is happy. This makes sure that you can get on in lessons, enjoy what you are doing, and learn much more. • Your headteacher, and other grown-ups working in the school, run the school well. • Your teachers and teaching assistants work hard to make their teaching even better, and to get it right for each one of you. Your parents really like the school and feel you learn well.

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

• You need to know always how you can make your work better. • Your school's governors need to look much more closely at how you are getting on, so they can help the school to be even more successful than it is now. • You need to know and understand more about other cultures, traditions and beliefs, as well as your own.