



Thorpe CofE Aided Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 125174
LEA Surrey LEA
Inspection number 281909
Inspection dates 22 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Tusha Chakraborti AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	The Bence
School category	Voluntary aided		Thorpe
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Egham TW20 8QD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01932 562329
Number on roll	49	Fax number	01932 562529
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Canon Dr M J Hereward-Rothwell
Date of previous inspection	17 May 2004	Headteacher	Mrs E F C Nichols

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 22 June 2006 - 22 June 2006	Inspection number 281909
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small infant school, situated in the village of Thorpe. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background and live in the village and the surrounding area. A minority of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils having learning difficulties and disabilities is also below average. Attainment on admission is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Thorpe C of E Aided Infant is a good school, not just satisfactory as the school modestly graded itself. The school has many strengths and provides good value for money. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and excellent care and guidance from staff have raised pupils' standards and achievement significantly. The subject leaders are well aware of their responsibilities but their roles are not sufficiently developed yet. An exciting curriculum and a good range of extra-curricular activities fill the children with enthusiasm and help them achieve well. The vast majority of parents value the school's work highly.

At the heart of the school is the strong commitment to equal opportunity and to developing each pupil to their potential. Pupils' personal development is good as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Their awareness of different cultures is satisfactory and the school has rightly identified ways to improve further.

A very good start to the children's education is made in the Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in the Reception class and are well placed to continue to do so in Year 1. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. This has contributed significantly to the good progress made by pupils. Consequently, they attain standards that are above the national average by the end of Year 2. Assessment data are used effectively by the teachers. Nevertheless, marking in Years 1 and 2 is not consistent and does not always guide pupils effectively enough to understand how they can improve. Subject leaders are newly in post and need to develop more in their roles.

The school knows its strengths and areas for development very well and has successfully addressed all issues raised in last inspection. The school is very well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of the subject leaders.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good because of good teaching. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have risen significantly over the past three years and are now above average overall. Results in the national assessments in 2005 were above average in reading and mathematics with a high proportion of pupils attaining the highest level. Results in writing were slightly above average. Teacher assessment data indicates that results this year could be even higher. Effective support from teachers and support staff enables pupils to improve reading, writing and mathematical skills rapidly. Pupils meet the challenging targets set by the school and some exceed them. Parents are very appreciative of the school's hard work to raise standards of their children. One parent

comments that her daughter has 'excelled since starting Thorpe last September', while her performance was 'average' in the previous school.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress as a result of good teaching and a rich curriculum. Most children achieve in line with the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and some exceed them.

There is very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as their peers. There is no significant difference in achievement between different groups of pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Their cultural development is satisfactory. Although pupils are aware of their own culture, their knowledge of other cultures is limited because there are too few opportunities in the curriculum for them to develop their understanding. However, the school has prioritised this in its development plan. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and want to achieve as well as they possibly can. They take responsibility for their actions and their behaviour is good as a result. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel that the school is a safe and secure place. They develop a clear sense of community through visits from members of the local community and the fundraising activities for charities. They have very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are supported very well in this by the healthy diet at lunchtime and the wide range of sports and physical activities. The school council allows pupils to take on responsibility for improving the school, such as promoting a healthy school lunch. Pupils' good literacy, numeracy and computer skills prepare them well for the later life. Attendance has improved as a result of the school's hard work and is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff work together effectively to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' individual learning needs and the challenging targets. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and staff have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour. Consequently, pupils behave well, have very positive attitudes to learning and are determined to achieve well. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology (ICT), especially the interactive white boards, to ensure that pupils participate fully in lessons and understand what they are expected to learn.

In the Foundation Stage, good teaching and very effective use of information derived from assessments of pupils' progress help children to achieve well and to develop independent learning skills. Assessments are used effectively in Years 1 and 2 also, particularly in English and mathematics, to inform planning and identify areas for

improvement. Pupils' work is marked frequently but marking does not always guide pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum that contributes effectively to pupils' achievement. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and more able pupils is very good and a wide range of strategies are used to support them. Effective links are developing between different subjects which enable pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to support their learning across the curriculum. Pupils' skills for working independently of the teacher are promoted throughout the school and help to develop their confidence.

The school offers an extensive range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities which enhance pupils' learning experiences successfully. Events like science and technology weeks, when pupils work with engineers, and a writing workshop with an author, make valuable contributions to pupils' learning experiences. Children in the Foundation Stage have a curriculum tailored to meet their needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school gives outstanding care, guidance and support to its pupils. The vast majority of parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school's work. Pupils are very appreciative of the way the school supports them; one pupil comments, 'we can go to our teachers with any problem because they always help us.' Excellent relationships across the school, coupled with the high priority placed on treating each child as an individual, creates an excellent learning environment for all pupils. All health and safety issues are addressed, and risk assessments are rigorous. Child protection procedures are well established. Tracking pupils' progress is very effective and individual target setting is used very well to guide pupils' academic development. The assessment system in the Reception class is particularly effective and is used very well to plan lessons. The support for the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is excellent and the needs of these pupils are monitored very successfully through a highly co-ordinated support system. As a result, the number of pupils requiring such help has reduced significantly. The school works very successfully with parents, volunteers and external agencies to support all children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management are good and have a significant impact on the good quality of pupils' achievement and personal development. The school has an accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, although it is modest in some of its views. The headteacher, aptly supported by the senior teacher and other staff, provides outstanding leadership and strong and clear direction for the school's work. She,

together with the governors, steered the school safely out of special measures in 2004, continues to bring improvements and is successful in recruiting and retaining experienced staff. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and the school is well placed to secure further improvement. The newly-constituted leadership structure has clearly defined roles that are closely focused on improving pupils' learning. The senior teacher leads the Foundation Stage very effectively, giving children a good start to their education from early on. However, the roles of some of the co-ordinators are not well developed yet as they are new to the posts. The school is aware of this and plans are in hand to improve this area.

The school monitors its effectiveness well and parents' views are encouraged and acted upon. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that teaching is consistently good despite recent staff changes. Information from tests and assessments is analysed carefully and used effectively to plan for improvement. As a result, standards and achievement have risen significantly in recent years. Each child is valued and the school has been highly successful in ensuring that all have equal opportunities.

The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and are committed to raising standards. They are well informed and provide a good level of challenge and support.

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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	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	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?	1	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

Pupils

I would like to thank you for the wonderful welcome you gave me when I visited your school. It was a great pleasure to hear that you really enjoy coming to school and think it is very good.

I am pleased to tell you that you are right to do so because I also think that your school is good. You receive good teaching, support and guidance from all the adults. When they give you difficult work, you do it well. I know that your headteacher and all other staff really do a very good job in organising the school to help you to do so. I also liked your attitudes to school, your good behaviour and the way you join in. I was pleased to see that you understand the importance of staying safe very well and take part in the wide range of physical activities to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Your school is helping you to learn even better. I have asked your teachers to help you more when they mark your work. I have also asked them to plan your subjects so that they are even more interesting. I am sure your school will carry on improving in the future and that you will all carry on working hard. With every good wish for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Tusha Chakraborti

Lead Inspector