



Tweeddale Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134165
Local Authority Sutton
Inspection number 282476
Inspection dates 13–14 December 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Gray

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tweeddale Road
School category	Community		Carshalton
Age range of pupils	3–11		SM5 1SW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8644 5665
Number on roll (school)	398	Fax number	020 8641 8834
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Gallop
		Headteacher	Mrs Mary Smith
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 13–14 December 2006	Inspection number 282476
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is bigger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small, but increasing, number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with statements of special need is above average and there is a much bigger proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities than found in most schools. The local area is considerably disadvantaged.

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 rapidly improving school which gives its pupils a satisfactory education. The school's amalgamation three years ago was not easy. Many staff left and there were difficulties with staff recruitment. Older pupils' behaviour was not good enough. Standards were low in the first set of national tests but have risen markedly since in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' behaviour is now good and they are proud of their school. There is a peaceful and happy atmosphere and pupils are keen to learn. Parents are supportive of the school, but a small number frequently send their children to school late. Pupils say that this sometimes disturbs them in their first lesson in the morning, and teachers sometimes have to explain things all over again to latecomers. This unpunctuality affects attendance figures, because a small number of pupils arrive after the register is closed and so have to be marked absent. The fact that this is mainly among younger children shows that it is an issue for their parents and not the children themselves.

Pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave in Year 6 and their overall achievement is satisfactory. Some pupils achieve well, especially those with learning difficulties or whose first language is not English. The progress that other pupils make varies from year to year, depending on the quality of the teaching. Higher attaining pupils do not always receive work which is hard enough, especially in mathematics. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress towards the goals set for them, and provision is satisfactory.

The school gives its pupils good care, guidance and support. Welfare procedures are particularly good, so that pupils know where to go if they have problems or worries. The marked rise in academic standards is a result of the school's effective procedures to track pupils' progress and direct extra support where it is needed. The pupils' attitudes to learning are also contributors to improved standards. They know that their teachers want them to improve, and work hard in response.

The school has improved so quickly because of the clear direction and determination set by leadership and management. The headteacher is a very good leader and she receives untiring support from her deputy and senior managers. They have tackled priorities in the right order, with obvious success, showing that they have a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give greater challenge to higher attaining pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Work with those few families who find it hard to get their children to school on time, in order to improve pupils' punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with a wide range of ability, but a large proportion has low skills. They make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in personal development. By the time they enter Year 1, many pupils reach the goals expected of them but a good number do not because they began with such low skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, but standards are still below average by the end of Year 2. The most recent results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were broadly average, showing that these pupils made good progress. Results at the higher level were a little below average in mathematics and science but above in English. Progress in other year groups is not so consistent. The best progress is made by pupils with learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English, because of the good support they receive from teachers and assistants. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, but could reach higher standards, given more consistent challenge, especially in mathematics. Many boys begin in the Nursery with fewer skills than girls and their attainment remains below that of girls throughout the school. The school is working to overcome this, with initiatives such as extending the Foundation Stage curriculum into Year 1 for lower attaining boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They like school very much and know how to keep safe in lessons and out of school. Pupils work and play happily together because they value the code of behaviour and share a respect for each other. They enjoy their lessons, particularly sharing ideas in discussions. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and recognise its life-long importance.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and underpins the happy atmosphere in the school. Pupils know that others have different values and beliefs and think this is a good thing. One boy said, 'If everyone thought the same, the world would be boring. You'd all be doing exactly the same'. Through their support of a wide range of charities and understanding of world issues, pupils are acquiring a good understanding of economic problems and gaining important life skills. The school council take their responsibilities very seriously and have led a recent initiative to raise £1,500 for the school and charity.

The attendance of most pupils is good. The school works hard to get parents to realise the value of full attendance and pupils themselves spoke of this. However, attendance figures are affected by a few families who do not realise the importance of getting their children to school on time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All adults have good relationships with pupils and this is the foundation of their good attitudes to learning. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and frequently make changes to the next day's programme as a result of their evaluation of how well pupils have learnt. These plans show what pupils of different abilities are to do, but the activities given to higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently demanding, or are sometimes given to them only after they have completed tasks which were too easy. This is especially so in mathematics, though not in all classes. Challenge is best where the teacher has planned what the pupils will learn from an activity, rather than just what they will do.

Pupils say how much teachers help them to improve when they mark their work, but this is not consistent from class to class. There are some very good examples of helpful comments for what to do next, but this is not so in all books.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and provides for the needs of all pupils in raising the levels of their basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Co-ordinators are in the process of linking subjects together to make learning more interesting. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils wrote the diary of an Aztec child, using their knowledge of the Aztec civilisation from history, geography and design and technology. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils, but the school recognises that the provision for higher attaining pupils is not consistent. Pupils' learning is enriched by a programme of visits that relate to topics they study. The good range of extra-curricular activities is valued by the pupils and this adds to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of individual care offered to pupils is one of the strengths of the school. Vulnerable pupils receive dependable and very effective help. The needs of every pupil are recognised and met very effectively, both in the school and with additional support from outside agencies. The school has a friendly and caring atmosphere which is valued by pupils and parents. Bullying is an area on which pupils have focused serious attention and is now rare. A member of the school council said, 'We've really done a lot about it so we sorted it out'. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly and sensitively so that pupils feel they are well looked after and safe. Child protection and risk assessment arrangements are very good.

Good use is made of assessment information to help any who may be likely to fall behind, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils know their targets and refer to them to check their work; as one said, 'Instead of remembering, you can look and see'. Assessment is used effectively in most subjects, except ICT, where a system is in the process of development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and her senior team give clear direction and have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. The school's self-evaluation is very effective; for example, the school is well aware that there is work to be done to achieve a higher proportion of good and outstanding teaching, and much has already been achieved. Middle managers are involved well in all subjects and this is enabling achievement to rise across the curriculum. The senior team has made good use of external expertise and has received good support from the local authority.

The governors, very ably led by the chair, show strong commitment towards establishing the school as the focus of provision for the local community, and raising the standards and achievement of pupils. The governing body was instrumental in improving the school's direction at the time of the amalgamation. Through the committee structure, governors keep themselves well informed and give the school a good degree of constructive challenge.

The leadership of the school is successful in setting a calm and purposeful tone to the life of the school, and fostering pupils' enjoyment of school. One parent summed up recent improvements in the school: 'I believe over the last few years the teaching has got stronger and that communication between the school and parents is now really good'.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

By the time you read this letter, Christmas will be over and you may have forgotten that three inspectors came to your school in the last full week of term. You were all very busy with concerts and the Christmas lunch, but you still found lots of time to talk to us. Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us to enjoy our time with you.

You told us how much you enjoy school and how safe and happy you are there. Your parents said that some of you would like to be there even at weekends. You know about the importance of keeping fit and healthy and many of you take advantage of the sports clubs to help you do this. You told us that your school council is trying to organise even more clubs.

We found that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. It is improving all the time, as the school council told us. We could also see that and were pleased to find that you do your bit with good, considerate behaviour and by working hard. One of the ways you could help to make it better still is by making sure that you and your parents manage to get you to school on time every day. One of the school council told us how much it disturbs him when people keep arriving in dribs and drabs.

Your headteacher is very good at her job and all the adults work really well with her to make your school better. Many of you said that the adults are good at helping you if you are stuck. We agree. They give good help to those of you who find learning difficult. We have asked them to make sure that those of you who learn quickly are always given work that is hard enough, to help you reach higher levels. We learnt that you find targets and teachers' marking of your work helpful, so we have asked the school to make sure that all teachers do this equally well.

With best wishes for the new term.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead Inspector