



# Timbertree Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

**Unique Reference Number** 103966  
**Local Authority** Sandwell  
**Inspection number** 286822  
**Inspection dates** 2–3 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Cole

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Valley Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Cradley Heath
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		B64 7LT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 567830
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	106	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 567830
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Carl Billingham
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Gwynith O'Neil
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 2–3 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 286822
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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. Parents' economic circumstances are below average and there is some deprivation in the area. Children start at the school with below-average attainment. The school has a nursery unit, which is located on a separate site one mile away from the main school. Shortly before the inspection, the local authority announced its intention to close the nursery site. The school is in discussion with the authority about alternative arrangements for the children who attend the nursery.

## 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 and improving school. Throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, broadly average standards result from a sound education which has some good features. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and, except for some more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2, they make the progress they should. Children in the Nursery and pupils in Years 3 to 6 sometimes make good progress because of particularly effective teaching.

Pupils' progress is greatly helped by their good personal development and by their sense of well-being, which results from good guidance on safety, health and personal welfare. Pupils have sensible attitudes to school and learning, want to do their best and generally behave well. They enjoy their lessons and find them interesting. These positive attitudes reflect the strengths of the teaching. Pupils are managed effectively; some imaginative lesson planning excites pupils and the good support and encouragement from teachers and support staff all help pupils to make steady progress. The teaching of pupils in Years 3 to 6 generally ensures that they are challenged by the work and aware of what they must do to make maximum progress. However, in Years 1 and 2 some more-able pupils are not sufficiently stretched and are not clear enough about what they should be trying to achieve. Overall, the teaching is satisfactory.

The curriculum, which is satisfactory, supports pupils' progress with programmes of work that are suited to pupils' ages, abilities and needs. The good provision of extra activities helps to promote pupils' enjoyment outside of lessons and after school. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to enjoy and extend their learning through using information and communication technology (ICT) in their learning across the range of subjects.

A further reason for pupils' good attitudes is the overall good quality of care, guidance and support they receive. Teachers and support staff make good, caring relationships with pupils and these are backed up with thorough procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare and keeping a close check on how well they are getting on, both personally and academically.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. Over the last two years, the teaching and curriculum have been significantly improved and this has raised standards. These improvements result from the clear vision and firm determination of the headteacher. Senior staff keep a close watch on the school's performance and are well aware of how they can improve it. However, for a school of this size there are relatively few experienced and capable managers to whom responsibilities can be delegated and this hinders the pace of school improvement. Nevertheless, with strength in senior management and the recent track record of improvement, the school has a sound capacity for further improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils of all abilities in Years 1 and 2 are consistently challenged by their work and are aware of what they need to do to make progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management skills throughout the staff to allow wider delegation of responsibilities for taking the school forward.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning across subjects.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach broadly average standards. They make overall satisfactory progress as they move through the school. However, progress is uneven. Children in the Nursery make good progress. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory for most pupils. However, a lack of challenge in the work they are given means that some more-able pupils make less progress than they should. Overall, standards at the end of Year 2 are a little below average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make sound and sometimes good progress so that they leave the school with standards that are broadly average, as national test results show. The latest results show a significant improvement over the previous year. The improvement is particularly evident in the performance of boys and the performance of all pupils in mathematics and science. This is the result of well-focused improvements in teaching which senior staff have promoted. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are achieving at least satisfactorily in relation to their earlier attainment.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Good relationships with teachers and support staff are helping pupils enjoy school, to have positive attitudes to learning and to attend regularly. As one pupil commented, "I like the way teachers keep saying 'Well done!' " Behaviour is good, and the few pupils who have particular difficulties usually respond well to positive management. Occasional instances of minor harassment are dealt with effectively so pupils feel safe. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. They keenly join in opportunities for physical exercise and enjoy the 'Walk to School Week'. Pupils' growing confidence and independence, together with satisfactory academic progress, are giving them a sound preparation for their future economic well-being.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong and of the cultural diversity of the wider world. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the recently increased opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, as playground 'buddies' helping younger pupils. Such roles, and the affairs of the school council, also represent a sound contribution to the community. Pupils contribute to the wider community through activities such as Christmas musical performances in a local church.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

A consistently effective feature of lessons is the skilful management of pupils so that lessons are calm, orderly and purposeful occasions. Pupils respond positively to teachers' clear expectations that they will work and behave well. Lessons move on at a steady pace and pupils say learning is often 'fun'. The use of interactive whiteboards makes for some lively presentations. Teachers and support staff give pupils much encouragement and help and this is an especially strong and effective feature in the Nursery. Recently improved assessments of individual pupils' progress are used to plan the next steps in learning and the help to be given to pupils whose progress is below expectations. However, the matching of tasks to pupils' needs is more successful with older pupils than younger ones. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially more able ones, are not always sufficiently challenged by their tasks and sometimes this slows the progress they make.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

A suitable range of activities, which includes extra support programmes for pupils who need them, meets most needs. An adequate range of experiences is provided, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning across different subjects. Opportunities for younger pupils to develop creativity are relatively few. Good programmes of work promote pupils' personal and social skills, increase pupils' self-esteem and ensure well-being. One pupil's polished and stylish presentation about his holidays, using ICT, was a striking example of growth in confidence and social skills. The curriculum for the youngest children is sound, but opportunities for physical development in the Nursery are limited by a shortage of suitable outdoor equipment. Pupils appreciate the good range of sporting and musical activities, 'special days', residential visits, visitors and clubs, which support their personal development, extend learning opportunities and foster enjoyment.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Thorough systems to promote pupils' health, safety and well-being operate well. Staff are vigilant in the care of their pupils and know their needs well. Links with external agencies provide good support for vulnerable children. Sound support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enables them to make satisfactory progress. The introduction of a whole-school policy, which has an emphasis on support and rewards, is improving pupils' self-discipline and is resulting in good behaviour. Teachers explain to pupils how well they are doing and how they can improve, setting targets for them and involving pupils themselves in assessing their own progress. Some strategies here are new and are not applied consistently. They are working well with pupils in Years

3 to 6 but pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always clear about what is expected of them or how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school is led with clear vision and great determination by the headteacher, who is very well supported by the senior staff. The headteacher's commitment was especially significant during the four terms after she took up her post when financial pressures prevented the appointment of a deputy or assistant head. The senior staff show full commitment to raising the quality of education and the standards achieved, while maintaining the school's established ethos of good attitudes and behaviour. Recent improvements to the school are already raising standards. Improvements are well founded on a sound understanding of the school's performance and of how it can best move forward. Improvement has been achieved against the backdrop of a lack of funds and of difficulties associated with the management of the remotely located nursery and its future. The level of improvement made is commendable in view of the fact that few staff have substantial leadership and management skills or experience. This hinders the delegation of responsibilities. Consequently, the burden of keeping a check on the school and managing improvement falls too heavily on the most senior staff, and the pace of improvement is slower than it might be. Governors, many of whom are new to the role, are making a satisfactory contribution to leadership and management.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to say a big 'thank you' to you all. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you.

It was good to see how well you get on with your school work. You behave well and try hard. You also get on well with each other and with the adults. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed school. We noticed this when we came to some of your lessons. Your teachers make lessons interesting and fun. We also noticed that all the school staff give you lots of help and look after you really well. This is just what you told us.

We have said that we think your school is giving you a satisfactory education and helping you to make satisfactory progress. However, we have suggested three ways the school could help you learn even more.

1. We think some younger children could do harder work and make quicker progress, so we have asked the teachers to see to this.

2. We think that more teachers should be able to help with the running of the school so that improvements can be made more quickly.

3. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to use computers to help you with your learning.

We wish you the very best for the future,