

Town Field Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106731
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	287595
Inspection dates	17–18 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Murphy

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	459
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Johnson
Headteacher	Mrs P Campbell CBE
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Thorne Road Doncaster South Yorkshire DN1 2JS
Telephone number	01302 368192
Fax number	01302 344098

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves an area of above average social and economic deprivation which is reflected in the high proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage; about one third is of diverse ethnicities, including Travellers. There are an increasing proportion of pupils from families of economic migrants and families seeking asylum. Many different languages are spoken and a very high proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally, although with a higher than usual number with statements of special educational need. Many pupils join and leave the school throughout their primary education and some travel a long distance to attend this school. The school holds the Healthy Schools award, Activemark Gold and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school enjoys the fullest support of its parents, and welcomes pupils from many different countries, ethnicities and religions. It provides outstanding care for its pupils and makes sure that extra help is readily available for those pupils who need it, including very good help for those learning English as an additional language. This is very important given the many pupils who join the school throughout each year. Pupils greatly appreciate the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle; the school has an award for encouraging healthy eating and ensures that pupils have plenty of physical exercise each day. This leads to much enjoyment and friendship throughout the school day. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent attitudes to their work stand them in good stead to make the most of the opportunities the school provides. Exceptional guidance means that pupils know exactly what it is they need to do to improve and teachers help them check their progress along the way.

The school serves a diverse and ever-changing community. For example, fewer than half of the pupils spend all of their primary education at this school. Many join late in their primary education with very little or no English. Pupils achieve well from their low starting points in Nursery. They make sound progress in Nursery and good progress in the Reception classes to attain standards that are below average by the beginning of Year 1. By the time the pupils leave school at Year 6, they almost attain standards that are in line with national averages in English and mathematics; this represents good achievement, especially as so many pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. In the main, pupils make good gains in their learning, as shown by the school's strong systems for tracking pupils' progress. Assessment has improved. It is much more accurate than it was and is used well to hold teachers accountable for the progress made by the pupils in their class. Although progress is accelerating it has some way to go to push on English and mathematics to reach national averages.

The quality of teaching is good and leads to a good pace of learning for all groups of pupils. Strengths include the supportive work with pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. Planning is clear and helps to match work to pupils' needs. Good links are made between pupils' targets and marking to quicken their learning. A lively curriculum with plenty of enrichment further aids pupils' progress and interest. High standards in art and design reflect the school's Artsmark Gold.

Leadership and management are of good quality. Governors provide an effective balance of challenge and support. Recent changes at assistant headteacher level are carefully thought through yet have still to make an impact. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, strong support from the deputy headteacher and the team spirit among staff, impact exceedingly well on pupils' personal development and care and on their accelerating progress. These attributes are securely underpinned by monitoring and effective actions to improve the quality of education. The school provides good value for money and is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well through the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, where particular attention is paid to their personal development, speaking and listening. When they leave the Foundation Stage their standards are below the national expectations for their age group. The current Year 6 group of pupils reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics. This represents good progress. The school's low results in the national tests in 2006 were partly due to a large changeover of pupils who arrived or left the school towards the end of Year 6 and also to a significant number of pupils not speaking English when they arrived. The school's tracking system enables pupils' progress to be clearly monitored, and this has helped the school to implement a range of carefully planned intervention strategies to enable all pupils to achieve their best. As a result, pupils' progress has improved this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for and make good progress with the help of a skilled team of support staff. Pupils with English as an additional language are also given additional help to ensure that they make good progress. Many of the goals set for 2007 have been exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. The pupils are very friendly and extremely well mannered, and their behaviour is excellent. They respect their teachers and this leads to a cohesive community with a calm and orderly ethos. Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and the many clubs they participate in. They develop very good attitudes to their work and are curious, careful and persistent. Children in the Reception class take great strides in learning to be independent and helping to organise their work and tidy up. Older pupils are very mature in their outlook and set an exceptional example for younger ones. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. They take their roles as monitors, student council members and play leaders very seriously and make an excellent contribution to the smooth running of the school by acting on the views of their classmates. They know that their voices count. They successfully raise funds for many good causes. Pupils feel safe and know they can discuss any concerns with staff. They take full advantage of the healthy snack and meals services. They keep fit through regular physical activity during the school day. Their understanding of emotional and personal issues they may face as adults is very good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is well planned to meet the needs and abilities of all pupils. This is partly because the well-developed assessment and very effective tracking system enables teachers to accurately assess their pupils' needs and progress. Work is carefully set to ensure that all pupils are challenged. Pupils are regularly encouraged to evaluate their own learning, and this helps them better understand what they need to do next to improve. Skilled support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables all pupils to fully access the curriculum, and to develop in confidence and self-esteem. Much use of discussion and plentiful opportunities for

collaborative working enable pupils to become actively involved in lessons. The classrooms provide a vibrant source of learning materials and interactive displays to support the learning process. The use of interactive whiteboards provides a stimulating and visual learning resource. Spirituality and reflection seep through lessons, as in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were encouraged to listen to music to bring alive a piece of text. In the best lessons questioning is used effectively to measure pupils' understanding and previous knowledge, and work is closely matched to the individual learning plans of the less able pupils. However, in a small number of lessons, these elements were not apparent. Marking of pupils' work is positive, and makes clear what needs to be done next to improve the work. All pupils have targets and know what they must do to achieve them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. In the Foundation Stage children have much opportunity to plan and review their activities, which leads to developing independence. Recently developed programmes for teaching literacy and numeracy through all subjects are beginning to make learning more interesting and relevant. This reflects the school's Basic Skills Quality Mark. Focused support activities boost achievement for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Occasionally, worksheets are over-used, which inhibits pupils making full use of their skills, especially in mathematics. The teaching of French and an extensive programme of visits, visitors and residential visits enriches the curriculum well. A very good range of after-school clubs and activities promotes pupils' understanding of the need for safe and healthy lifestyles. The school has good programmes for developing pupils' understanding of relationships, the dangers of drugs, global awareness and environmental care. The school's links with Canada and the USA is recognised in the achievement of the International School award and broadens pupils' understanding of the wider world. Good training for parents helps them support their children's learning. Wide access to computers ensures that pupils have high awareness of the use of modern technology for learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for all pupils. Parents agree that because of this, pupils' 'self-worth and confidence grow and have a tremendous impact on their progress' and that the school is like 'an extended family'. The exceedingly calm and purposeful atmosphere in school is especially helpful in settling vulnerable pupils, such as those new to the school and to the English language. Strong teamwork leads to especially good communication, particularly with parents, who express tremendous confidence in the school. The school has outstanding procedures to promote excellent behaviour and prevent bullying. The very good work of the attendance officer and the learning partner together with links with support agencies ensure that pupils attend regularly, are safe and learn to handle emotional concerns. First-rate systems to set individual targets, monitor progress and give guidance ensure that pupils make rapid progress. Child protection arrangements and procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare meet requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher gives an exceedingly clear sense of purpose to the leadership of the school. The school has developed a reflective approach and rigorous systems to check the quality of teaching and learning. This, together with procedures to hold staff to account and to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, mean that pupils' needs are met very well. The school responds well to the changing needs of its community such as in the way it works with the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service to provide for those pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and work in partnership with each other to bring about the best for the pupils in their care. Much improved tracking systems enable the progress of all pupils to be monitored and extra support to be provided where it is needed. The school improvement plan provides a framework of actions to help the school meet its priorities. It does not indicate clearly the precise responsibilities or make sufficiently clear the quantifiable targets by which to judge success. The school underestimates its achievements and is constantly striving to better itself.

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Annex A

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

The inspectors agree with you and your parents that Town Field Primary School is a good school.

The best things are that you all get on so well together and quickly welcome newcomers so that children are happy at school and ready to learn. Parents understandably say that the school teaches you the value of 'understanding others' religions and viewpoints and living in harmony with each other'. This is why your school is like a big family. The teachers do a good job to help you learn quickly. This means that those of you learning English as a new language soon become fluent in using English. Those who need extra help to speed up their learning also do well because there are lots of adults to give you extra support. You understand how important it is to have a healthy life and you try hard to keep fit and eat healthy food. This helps you to be ready to learn new things quickly. Your headteacher always wants the best for you, and governors and other staff support her well in this, for example, in making sure your progress keeps up a good pace and standards continue to rise in English and mathematics. You can help by always doing your best.