

# Tuel Lane Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107519
<b>Local Authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	287835
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joe Peacock

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	121
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brionne Boddison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Judy Shaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Clay Street Tuel Lane Sowerby Bridge West Yorkshire HX6 2ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01422 831221
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Located in a former mill town on the outskirts of Halifax, the school is much smaller than average with almost all pupils being of a White British background. Falling school rolls in the area have resulted in a drop in pupil numbers and relatively small class sizes at the school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average and there is an above average proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

'Fantastic school, wonderful staff'. A typical parent's comment.

Inspection evidence shows that this is a good school in every respect and it gives good value for money. This agrees with the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. Parents are happy because their children are extremely happy and really love coming to school, consequently, attendance is above average. In the short time since her appointment, the enthusiastic headteacher has gained the support of all staff in providing a caring, supportive atmosphere. Pupils are given responsibilities, however small, and praised for their response to these. Pupils are really cheerful and friendly. The philosophy, supported so well by all staff, is proving to be successful in raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

Standards on entry to Nursery are generally below those typical for this age group. Pupils make good progress from Nursery to Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics because of the good quality teaching they receive. Standards are generally above average by Year 2. In some classes, however, tasks are not planned to match the different abilities of pupils closely enough. In these lessons, pupils do not make sufficient progress. More able pupils are not stretched enough and they do not make the progress of which they are capable. The quality of provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good, overall. Access for Reception children to the outdoor area is difficult and as a result, it is not being used often enough by this class. Nursery and Reception classes do not yet have the latest display board technology seen elsewhere in school. Most teachers make good use of computers but there is little evidence of these being used to support learning in some subject areas.

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school with teachers and teaching assistants working effectively as a team. Mathematics is taught exceptionally well and pupils attain much higher than average standards as a result. Excellent relationships exist between pupils and their teachers and pupils have a good attitude to their work. All pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The curriculum is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and their enjoyment of school. Pupils love learning to speak Spanish and there is good support for the after-school activities on two nights each week.

Parent's views about the school are very positive. They appreciate the good level of care, support and guidance for their children and the close partnership that they have with the school. Leadership and management are good. Key post holders such as the Foundation Stage coordinator and special needs coordinator are knowledgeable and extremely conscientious. Their departments are managed efficiently. All staff work well as a team and share responsibility for managing the different subject areas. They carefully monitor pupils' progress and use the information well to set new targets for literacy, numeracy and on occasions, personal and social skills. Subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. As a result, some teaching is not as effective as it should be and some pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Governors are very supportive and the new chair of governors, who has a very good knowledge of the school, is leading them well. Governors visit the school often and are successfully developing their role in monitoring the effectiveness of all aspects of the school with a view to bringing about improvement. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teachers' planning to ensure that tasks match the needs of all pupils, especially the more able.
- Use modern technology more effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Increase opportunities for children in Reception to use the outdoor area to extend their learning experiences.
- Develop the role of subject leaders to include regular and rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

'I am overjoyed at the progress my child has made!' A typical parent's comment.

Both achievement and standards are good. Children enter the school with lower than average skills. All make good progress because of the good quality of teaching and the close support of the skilled teaching assistants. By the end of their Reception year, most achieve the targets expected of them for this age group. Pupils' good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, largely due to the warm and friendly atmosphere that the whole staff have helped to create. This makes pupils feel secure, happy and keen to learn. There was a dip in the school's performance in reading and writing in the 2006 national tests, caused mainly by a relatively small year group with an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Standards in mathematics remained above average. The school benefited from its involvement in a Primary Learning Programme with mathematics as the focus for improvement. The current standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, well above average in mathematics and average in writing. An analysis by the school has found that boys and some more able pupils are not achieving their potential in writing so strategies to remedy this have been introduced. Pupils attain high standards in Spanish as it is taught exceptionally well. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress as they benefit from the close support in class provided by the many teaching assistants.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

'I like the values the school teaches'. A typical parent's comment.

Pupils respond well to the excellent opportunities they have to take responsibility in a caring and supportive school environment. 'I'm in charge of the dinosaurs', said one boy proudly. All pupils agree that they really enjoy coming to school. This shows in their attendance which has improved significantly and is now above average. Pupils behave well in lessons and show a respect and consideration for others. Most are cheerful, polite and helpful.

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The strong inclusive nature of the school and emphasis on giving responsibility successfully develops pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Special assemblies recognise and reward their different achievements and help pupils to feel valued. Most understand, very well, how to keep safe and healthy. There are good links with the wider community and other schools and the school actively promotes a healthy lifestyle. A Fair Play Award from a recent sports event is proudly displayed in the school. Positive attitudes to work and a sense of responsibility are good starting points for future success in the workplace.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

'Brilliant staff'. A typical parent's comment.

The 'Magic Moments' display in the entrance area; a teacher wearing a pirate headscarf to give a story that extra bit of atmosphere and truly exceptional teaching support in the nursery reflect all that is good about the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

All pupils enjoy excellent relationships with their teachers and say that, 'teachers are really kind'. The supportive atmosphere is very reassuring to pupils, especially those who may lack confidence. Staff are quick to spot any difficulties pupils may have and all teaching assistants do a good job of supporting any pupil who needs help. As a result, pupils make good progress. Information from the regular assessment of pupils' progress is used well by staff to produce 'Child Target Certificates', which include literacy, numeracy and sometimes personal and social targets. There are weaknesses in some teachers planning. The needs of pupils with different ability levels are not always taken into account and more able pupils do not always have tasks that sufficiently challenge them. Those who finish their work before others are not always given interesting new work to promote further learning. Reception children have too few planned opportunities to use the outdoor area, limiting their learning experiences.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

'I love Spanish'.

'We get lots and lots and lots of maths!'

'Wake up and shake up is fun'. Some pupils' comments.

The broad and balanced curriculum with the recently introduced SEAL initiative (Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning) is having a significant impact on pupils' personal development. There is a particularly strong emphasis on improving writing skills at present and this is successfully raising standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have Spanish lessons and most have a good vocabulary which enables them to ask and answer questions. The school is well resourced with computers but opportunities to use them to support learning in all subjects are limited in some classes. Frequent visits and visitors further enhance the curriculum. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good with activities on two nights after school each week. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the physical education sessions with staff and pupils from the high school. Curricular arrangements in the Foundation Stage are let down by the limited opportunities children in Reception have for outdoor play. The school is on a steep slope and children have 14 stone steps to negotiate to reach the playground, making the physical access a barrier which has yet to be overcome.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides good care, advice and support within a strong, supportive family atmosphere. The partnership with parents is a real strength and their support adds much to the personal development of pupils. Aspects of personal development such as speaking and listening skills are promoted particularly well in the nursery by the teacher and teaching assistant, who make

a formidable team. The use of praise and rewards leads to positive attitudes and good behaviour. Academic support and guidance are good. Pupils' individual learning targets are regularly reviewed. Those with a particular talent are identified and well provided for by staff. Pupils with learning difficulties are given excellent support by teaching assistants and this helps them to make good progress. Appropriate procedures to ensure health and safety, including child protection are in place and reviewed regularly. Strategies to improve attendance have proved to be effective with attendance improving year on year.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

'We are a friendly school with helping hands, kind words, smiles and listening ears.' Statement displayed in the hall.

The headteacher is deeply committed to school improvement and has achieved much in the short time since her appointment. The school is helping every pupil to feel safe, be happy and feel valued. Staff with management responsibilities provide good support and the team spirit in this small school is readily apparent. The management of the Foundation Stage and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties, for example, are particularly effective. Staff know the school well and their evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been tackled well but the difficult access to the outdoor learning area from the Reception class is still presenting a barrier to learning. The school strives for continued improvement in what it provides for pupils. It is, for example, currently reviewing its procedures for subject leadership and management with staff pooling their expertise to work in teams. Governance is good. The business of the governing body is carefully and thoroughly reported.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

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

First of all, thank you for making me feel so welcome. I really enjoyed talking to you all, looking around your classrooms and joining you for assembly. I can see why you like your assemblies so much. The story about Tanni Grey-Thompson was so interesting and I was amazed at all the awards you were given for being so responsible. The other things that I thought were particularly good were:

- how hard your headteacher and all the staff are working to make sure that you enjoy coming to school. Some of your lessons, such as Spanish, were really interesting and guaranteed to make you want to learn
- how well you behave in class and around school. Maybe you could talk a little more quietly in the dining hall?
- the good start that you all have in the Nursery with lots of interesting things to do like using the telephone from the train in the playground or weaving
- the good progress that you all make, especially in mathematics
- how well you are cared for and supported by your teachers, their helpers and all the lunchtime staff
- the way your parents and the school staff get on so well together.

I am asking your headteacher and staff to concentrate on:

- giving Reception children more chances to have fun playing outdoors
- making sure that you use computers a lot more in lessons and that you all have work to do that makes you think hard
- getting teachers to regularly visit one another's classrooms to check how well you are doing.

Thank you again, for helping me with this inspection. I think that you are lucky to have such a good school. I hope that you will carry on enjoying all that it has to offer and be just as polite and friendly when you are older.