



Tarporley CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111260
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288905
Inspection dates 31 January –1 February 2007
Reporting inspector Paul Bamber

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Park Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Tarporley
Age range of pupils	5–11		Cheshire CW6 0AN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01829 732348
Number on roll (school)	190	Fax number	01829 733543
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr I Bailey
		Headteacher	Mr R Coates
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come from quite a wide area to attend this average sized school. The vast majority are of White British heritage and many come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. Low numbers claim free school meals or use English as an additional language. There is a lower than average proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. More pupils than is the average join or leave the school at the normal time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. There are a number of good features. Pupils' effective personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that they behave maturely and relate very well to each other. They are well cared for and supported to ensure that they are happy in school and that they feel safe and secure in lessons and at play. They have a good curriculum that provides them with an exciting range of experiences in and out of school with opportunities, for example, to learn Spanish and to participate in healthy exercise.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Recent staff appointments and changes in the deployment of teachers are having a positive impact on raising achievement and on the quality of teaching. Pupils achieve well and reach high standards in reading throughout the school. However, progress made by the pupils in science and by boys, in writing, is a relative weakness. This has been recognised by the school and some strategies for improvement implemented. It is too early to evaluate their success. Pupils are willing learners, cooperating well in order to learn from each other. However, teachers do not always ask questions or set tasks that sufficiently match the needs of pupils of different abilities. This means that more able pupils and those who find learning more difficult, do not consistently achieve as well as they might.

The standards pupils attain, including children in the Reception class, are consistently above and sometimes well above average. Because of this the school has been insufficiently rigorous in checking on how well pupils are progressing. This means that senior management and class teachers have often been late in identifying underachievement and in modifying their teaching to address weaker progress where it occurs. It also explains why the school judged the quality of leadership and management, of pupils' achievement and of teaching and learning as good rather than satisfactory. Currently in Year 6 there is some inspiring teaching and, as a result, pupils do well and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides a strong lead in creating a positive ethos within the school community, manages the day to day running of the school efficiently and maintains effective links with local school and churches. Assistant headteachers have made significant contributions to recently introduced assessment and tracking systems and to pupils' good personal development. Senior and middle managers have placed too little focus on evaluating the impact of their actions on improving pupils' achievement. Governance is strong and has a positive influence on school improvement, especially in recent staff appointments. The school's record of improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Most issues identified as needing improvement have been addressed, especially pupils' information and communication technology skills. However, writing still needs to improve. The recent changes to the teaching staff, to senior management and to the way in which the school tracks pupils' progress places the school in a good position to improve further. The school's self-evaluation and the value for money it provides are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve all pupils' achievement in science and boys' performance in writing.
- Ensure that more able pupils and those who find learning more difficult are consistently and effectively challenged by the work they are set.
- Use the school's systems to check pupils' progress more regularly and rigorously to ensure that they all achieve well.
- Improve the rigour of self-evaluation by identifying more precisely the impact of actions on pupils' academic achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's skills are above expectations for their age when they enter the school. They have an effective start in Reception and make good progress, especially in their language and literacy, mathematical and personal and social development. They enter Year 1 well-equipped with the expected skills and continue to make steady progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are significantly above average, with reading a particular strength. The 2006 assessments reflect this picture with many pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics but even more in reading. The Year 6 national test results over the past few years indicate standards above the national average in English and mathematics, but broadly average in science. Although an improvement in achievement for Year 6 pupils took place in 2006, in Years 3 to 6 too many have not made the progress that they should in writing and science. Given their good starting points in the Reception class and achievements in Years 1 and 2, those children with learning difficulties and those who are more able have been relatively underachieving. The school has identified this underachievement and taken steps to address it. However, it is too soon to judge the full impact of these new initiatives.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are courteous, friendly, articulate and well behaved. They lead healthy lives, enjoy exercise and eat a balanced diet in school. They like school. Their good daily attendance and keen participation demonstrate their enjoyment and appreciation of the school's interesting and varied curriculum. Pupils have a voice, influencing the provision of better playground facilities and in promoting a keen awareness of environmental issues. Older pupils' membership of the school council enables them to understand democratic principles. Their work as 'buddies' to younger pupils and in community projects means they are developing successfully into young citizens. However, pupils in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 have limited opportunities to contribute to decision making.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, its quality is satisfactory overall. Teaching enables pupils to maintain the above average standards with which they enter the school. However, teachers have not effectively used the information about how well pupils are progressing to influence what they teach to different ability groups. As a result the more able and those who find learning more difficult have not progressed as well as they should, especially in writing and in science. The teaching of reading is consistently good and pupils achieve well in this basic skill. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are consistently well taught. Lessons in these classes are pacy and exciting, motivating pupils to strive for improvement and to enjoy their learning very much. Where pupils have opportunities to assess their own and others' learning, they seize them enthusiastically and make well reasoned judgements to help both themselves and their fellow pupils recognise how they can improve their work. Teaching assistants make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. However, they are hampered in being fully effective in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities because the targets set for these pupils are not specific enough in identifying detailed steps for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy an interesting and varied curriculum that promotes their basic skills well and meets all requirements. It is particularly successful in helping pupils to become effective members of their community, in respecting themselves and others and in developing skills that equip them to use their leisure time productively. It is less successful in ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can in science or to ensure that boys are more successful writers. Pupils' interest in learning is enhanced by many visits to places of interest and a wide range of visitors to the school. The spiritual and cultural development is particularly well promoted as a result. Weeks devoted to particular themes also contribute well to pupils' understanding and achievements in mathematics, in following healthy lifestyles and in solving problems.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support provided is good. Pupils say they feel very safe and happy and express high levels of trust in the adults who care for them. They know there is always someone to talk with and importantly feel that the support provided really works. These features make a crucial contribution to the very positive attitudes that pupils demonstrate. Procedures for safeguarding and protecting pupils and for checking potential risks are in place and are regularly updated. Academic guidance is based on the school's new systems for tracking pupils' progress. However,

as yet, not all pupils understand how well they are doing or where to focus their efforts in order to improve their work. The arrangements to ensure smooth transfer to secondary school are a particular strength and an indication of the good links the school has with partner institutions.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Although the leadership of the school has been focused on raising and sustaining standards and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being, managers at all levels have not until recently got to grips with the causes of underachievement for some pupils in Years 3 to 6. The new senior management team, with clear direction and challenge from effective governors, has accurately identified areas where achievement needs to improve. Senior and middle managers are developing their role in and the skills needed to measure the impact of their actions on helping pupils to improve. Parents are very appreciative of the good relationships with the school and support its work strongly. This contributes significantly to its positive ethos and to the good quality of support parents provide for their children's learning. Recent actions taken by governors and the headteacher to improve aspects of teaching and systems to track pupils' progress indicate a good capacity to improve.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	2
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	2

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?	2
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?	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	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

Thank you for making us so welcome during the days we spent in your school. We very much enjoyed our visit to your school which is currently providing you with a satisfactory education.

What is good about your school.

- You are very polite, welcoming and obviously enjoy school.
- You are particularly good readers.
- There is a lovely feel about the school because you all get on so well with each other and your teachers.
- The school provides you with many interesting activities outside the classroom that encourage you to be healthy, to be members of clubs and to learn useful skills for later life.
- You are well cared for and older children look after the younger ones in a very kind and helpful way.

For the school to help you to do even better the next steps are:

- we have asked the school to help all of you to do better in science and to make sure that the boys' writing improves
- those of you who find learning easier than most and those who find more difficulty with your work should be helped to do even better
- we have also asked the school to check more regularly on the progress you make during each year
- the staff who run the school or look after subjects should be a bit clearer about how and what they do helps you to do better in your work.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to really enjoy school and do very well with your work.