



Tipton St John Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 113438
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 289625
Inspection date 21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Denise Morris

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tipton St John
School category	Voluntary aided		Sidmouth
Age range of pupils	4-11		EX10 0AG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01404 812943
Number on roll (school)	98	Fax number	01404 812943
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Birch
		Headteacher	Penny Burnside
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

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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

Tipton St. John is a small rural Church of England primary school situated in the heart of the Devon countryside. It caters for a predominantly white population with little ethnic diversity, although several traveller families make use of the school from time to time. Although the number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, it is rising steadily. The school is based on a split site, in two elderly buildings on either side of the main village road. Children are taught in three classes. There are plans to move the school to new premises. The staff team are settled after a period of change.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many strengths and just a few areas that require improvement. One of the strengths of the school is the good leadership and management and its understanding of what it needs to do to improve. Governors are very supportive of the school's work. They are well aware of the challenges that the school faces. Consequently, the capacity for further improvement is good. The high quality of care provided for all pupils results in their outstanding personal development which reflects the strong family ethos of the school. Behaviour is a major strength, and is excellent in and around the school. The school makes the most of its accommodation and has made good use of local facilities to support learning. The accommodation is limited. It does not all belong to the school; however it is well managed, even though aspects of it are poor and do not fully meet all pupils' needs.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result, pupils achieve well. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are above average. For the youngest pupils in Reception, achievements are satisfactory rather than good because they do not have enough opportunities to deepen their understanding through activities appropriate to their age. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and by the time they reach the end of Year 2, standards are average. Across the school, girls achieve better than boys, particularly in their reading skills. Those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are effectively supported and because of this they achieve well. Pupils' lives are enriched by the many lively activities provided for them as part of the good curriculum. The extensive range of after-school clubs are very well attended. Good opportunities are provided to help pupils develop enterprise skills to support future learning. Procedures to keep pupils safe are good and older pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe evident, for example, in the careful way they cross the road from one building to another.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve planning for pupils in Reception to enable them to have better opportunities to learn and to participate in lessons.
- Improve the accommodation in both buildings, and work with the diocese to finalise plans for the new buildings as soon as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. It is typically average to below average. During their time at the school pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve well and attain good standards by the time they reach Year 6.

Children enter the Reception class with broadly average standards, although a few are below average in communication, language and literacy. During their time in the

Reception class, they make satisfactory progress. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1, they have mostly achieved the early learning goals for children of that age. Their achievement is satisfactory but they do not achieve as well as their older peers who are taught in the same room. This is because they do not have enough opportunities to participate fully in lessons.

During Years 1 and 2 pupils make good progress. This is typified by the most recent national assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2006. Although standards were average in mathematics, reading and writing, this represented good progress for this group whose attainment was below average on entry to the school. Pupils achieve well in language and communication as was evident when they discussed a forthcoming visit to the church. Their writing skills, however, are not as well developed as their speaking skills.

Between Years 3 and 6 pupils continue to make good progress so that, in the 2006 national tests, standards in mathematics, English and science were above the national average. The school's tracking of pupils' achievements shows that the girls make better progress and achieve higher standards in reading than the boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. The schools' clear Christian values, sense of community, care and cooperation are practised consistently by staff and pupils alike. Consequently, pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, and show high levels of respect for others. Pupils say that they enjoy school very much and have very positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour and their good level of attendance.

In lessons, pupils work safely and sensibly, cooperate with each other and care about each other. There is an absence of bullying in the school and pupils feel very safe and well cared for. Parents also strongly support this view.

Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles. For example, most join in regular exercise at the beginning of each day. The school is rightly aware that there is more to do to encourage pupils to bring healthy snacks to school. Pupils make a good contribution to the community and enjoy close links with other local schools. Pupils are challenged to show independence by undertaking simple responsibilities and they make a good contribution to the community.

Skills for their future well being are well developed, particularly their communication skills and their ability to discuss and reason. Basic literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology skills are good and independent working is well established.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned and teachers make very good use of vocabulary and questioning to extend pupils' thinking. Pupils are confident to answer questions even when not sure they are right, because of the good relationships they have with staff. Teachers offer clear explanations and examples, helping pupils to develop confidence as they try new things. Work is marked regularly and constructive feedback given.

Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well. Just occasionally, teachers do too much for pupils, limiting what is expected of them. Lesson planning for the Reception children is not always effective because they are expected to sit on the carpet for too long watching older children. At these times, they become passive observers rather than actively engaging in the lesson. Teachers make good use of the school's assessment systems so that there is a clear view of each pupil's progress. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities benefit from clear targets, regular monitoring and skilled support, enabling them to make good gains in learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good, lively curriculum in place which has many positive features. The high quality personal, social and health education programme is having a very positive impact on pupils' social skills, and on their enjoyment and confidence. The family group approach ensures that pupils quickly get to know each other and have many friends. The individual and small group support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good, promoting positive progress and high levels of self-esteem. Links with other schools are good, widening opportunities for learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the many visits that take place as part of the curriculum. The residential trip for pupils in Years 3-6 is a great favourite; 'We love the mud and night walks', they say. Very good attendance at after-school clubs exemplifies pupils' enjoyment of school. The curriculum for the Reception pupils is satisfactory overall. This is because activities are sometimes too difficult, and they do not always get the chance to make choices about what they want to do next.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care guidance and support are good. The school is quick to identify and respond to pupils' needs and good use is made of external agencies. The very close relationships with parents ensure that there is a good partnership between the school and the home. Parents speak highly of the school's commitment to the care of pupils. 'We believe that when the school says it cares for individuals, it really does', commented one parent. Formal arrangements for the protection, health and safety of pupils are good.

Pupils clearly feel safe and secure. A good level of training ensures that staff are confident about meeting the pastoral and medical needs of pupils.

Academic guidance and support is satisfactory. It has good features such as the feedback given to pupils in lessons about how well they are doing and how to improve. Some pupils do not feel that they receive enough information and guidance to become involved in setting their own targets. Inspection evidence agrees with this view. Pupils' progress is tracked appropriately, although information about the progress made by Reception children is less clear.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong lead and she is well supported by governors and staff. All staff are very committed to providing high quality role models for the pupils, and to improving standards. There is a caring atmosphere and a strong family approach in which pupils thrive. This results in their excellent behaviour. The school has successfully established partnerships with other schools in order to broaden expertise and opportunities to enrich pupils' learning. It is an inclusive school, enabling most groups of pupils to achieve well.

The school constantly seeks to improve itself, providing good levels of training for all staff on a regular basis. Careful and accurate self-evaluation has resulted in a clear knowledge of their own strengths and areas for improvement. This is reflected in the school development plan, which recognises the main areas for improvement raised by the inspection. The school is constantly trying to improve its limited accommodation, and a new site for the school is in the process of being identified. The school has identified that boys' reading skills are not as good as those of girls and have put a phonics programme in place this year to address this. However, there have not been sufficient checks on the progress and quality of teaching and curriculum for the Reception pupils.

The school sets challenging targets which almost all pupils achieve. Governors support the school well. They are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities, and discharge them effectively. The school is well placed to improve further.

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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?	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	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	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	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?	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?	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I would like to thank you for your help during the inspection of your school recently. I very much enjoyed my visit, and enjoyed meeting you all. I was pleased to see that you work hard and that you try to succeed in everything that you do.

Tipton St. John is a good school. Your headteacher and the staff enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. Staff make sure you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you do this extremely well. Your teachers plan lessons well and make sure you know how to improve your work. You told me that you like school and that there are lots of exciting things to do. I agree with you. Your behaviour is excellent and you make mostly good progress in your lessons.

I have asked your school to improve the activities and planning for the youngest children in the school who are in the Reception class so that they can make as much progress as the older pupils. The school's accommodation needs to be improved so that you do not have to cross the road so often, and to improve the space for you to work in. I am asking your headteacher, the governors and staff to do these things. I would also like to ask you to bring even healthier snacks to school for break time and in your packed lunches. This will help you to keep healthy.