



Toftwood Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121206
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 292056
Inspection date 1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Heather Weston HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Foundation		Toftwood, East Dereham
Age range of pupils	3-7		Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1LS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01362692612
Number on roll (school)	265	Fax number	01362690159
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs June Barnes
		Headteacher	Mrs Joanna Pedlow
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Toftwood Infant School is a larger than average sized school serving the village of Toftwood on the outskirts of Dereham in Norfolk. The number of pupils taking free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number speaking English as an additional language is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Toftwood Infant School is an outstanding school. The school's claim that 'every child matters and is special' is fully reflected in all its work and the school could rightly say the same about adults. It is truly inclusive. Practice in developing pupils' personal development and well-being is exemplary. It is threaded throughout the curriculum and as a result pupils are able to tackle the challenges of their work with confidence and enjoyment. As one parent says, the school has made her son 'a very happy boy' because 'you have all taken it so much further than just teaching.'

Pupils start school with below average attainment and make very good progress in relation to their starting points due to the outstanding provision. Because of the strong emphasis placed on using practical, challenging approaches to developing pupils' understanding in number, standards reached by pupils in mathematics are significantly higher than average. Writing skills are developed throughout the curriculum and pupils write about first hand experiences. As a result standards in writing are higher than average. Standards in reading are average; lower than in English because many pupils have not developed the higher levels of comprehension. In 2006 boys reached lower standards than girls in reading and writing because a significant proportion of boys had learning difficulties and disabilities.

The school is a learning organisation, with excellent opportunities for training and development provided for staff, governors and parents. Consequently, all those involved with the school ensure that pupils stay healthy, stay safe, contribute well to their community and prepare effectively for their economic well being. Pupils understand the importance of learning and are fully engaged as learners. Learning at Toftwood Infant school is fun because so much is based on real life activities and because the curriculum has been so carefully planned to weave subjects together and promote interest and enjoyment. The school works in true partnership with parents to ensure pupils have exemplary care and support. Pupils receive very good guidance to improve their progress. There is a clear focus on raising standards, although there is not a clear enough expectation by teachers regarding standards of presentation in pupils' written work.

Leaders at all levels make things happen. Leadership and management are very good and the manner in which the 'school team' work together to create an ethos with such a high focus on learning is exemplary. Self evaluation is exemplary and there is a strong determination for further improvement. As a result the capacity to improve is outstanding and the school provides outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is outstanding. Progress made in the Foundation Stage, by pupils in the nursery and in the reception year is very good.

Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make very good progress. Over the last five years standards have been above average. Standards in mathematics dropped in 2004 but have risen since then and are significantly higher than the national average. Standards in writing are above average and standards in reading are in line with the national average. Girls reach higher standards than boys in reading and writing, but boys reach slightly higher standards in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do much better than similar pupils nationally, and are making outstanding progress particularly in mathematics. All pupils are on course to at least meet their challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils demonstrate their understanding of how to develop a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and physical exercise. The provision of play equipment and physical activities at lunchtime adds to the opportunities they have for exercise. They have a growing understanding of how to stay safe. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the community, make decisions, and have a strong sense of belonging to Toftwood Infant school. They take responsibility for their actions and are given responsibilities such as being members of the school council, monitors, or 'playground pals'. An emphasis is placed on the development of life skills, problem solving and on developing a sense of value and worth.

Pupils are enthusiastic about school. Behaviour is very good, not just because the school fosters and reward good behaviour but because pupils value and support each other. Attendance is average. The school rightly does not tolerate lateness, because this causes pupils to miss learning opportunities. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good and their social and moral development is exemplary.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding because of the focus on learning. Teachers share learning objectives, so pupils know what they are learning and are able to say whether or not they have succeeded. The strong emphasis on the use of 'learning partners' means pupils are actively involved in their learning at all times and can discuss their thoughts before carrying out tasks. In Year 2 pupils evaluate each other's learning. Teachers plan very effectively together in year groups and subject leaders ensure

consistency and progression. Opportunities are created for a variety of learning experiences with an emphasis on practical activity, role play and drama. Teachers assess pupils' learning day by day, and make sure work is well matched to their learning needs. However they do not always ensure that pupils written work is presented well enough. Teachers have a shared understanding of levels of work and use verbal feedback or written marking to help pupils know how to make the next steps in their learning. Assessment information is used to track pupils' progress, to identify areas for development and to identify pupils who need additional support. The school actively encourages parents to work as partners in their children's learning. It is continually seeking to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and as a result learning is fun. Pupils are enthusiastic, as learning is based on practical experiences, delivered in an interesting and stimulating way. Links are made between subjects. Writing, information and communications technology (ICT), personal, social, health, and citizenship education, and mathematics are all developed through other subject areas. This practice is exemplary. Key features of the curriculum are that 'Every Child Matters' outcomes are included in all areas, and that it promotes the acceptance of diversity. The rich daily curriculum is further enriched by regularly planned activities including visits out and visitors to school, subject weeks and theme days. Japanese banquets, medieval banquets, Victorian days, 'wedding ceremonies' and 'christenings' are all part of the rich pattern of life at Toftwood Infant school. To avoid overloading pupils, the school has wisely chosen not to run more than one or two out of school clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

'We are grateful for the care my child is given every day in every way.' This comment from a parent reflects the views of others. The care and support given to pupils to ensure their welfare, and the attention given to their personal development and well-being are exemplary. Procedures for safeguarding children effectively meet all current requirements. Health and safety matters are addressed efficiently and risk assessments are thorough. Child protection procedures are sound and up to date. As a result pupils stay safe and secure.

Very well trained staff support pupils with a wide range of needs. All pupils are fully involved in all activities because the school addresses their particular needs in an exemplary fashion. The school works very effectively with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils make very good progress. Transition arrangements, in place at each stage of transfer, are also very effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The central vision of inclusion and pupils' personal development underpins everything. The headteacher provides clear direction, very ably supported by senior managers and well informed governors. The staff form a very strong team. All those with leadership responsibility evaluate the quality of provision and set direction within their given area and at the same time support and challenge each other to ensure continued improvement. There are clear links between the outcomes of self evaluation and the school improvement plan, which is focused firmly on promoting the well-being of all pupils and further raising standards.

Professional development is a strong feature of the school, linked to whole school issues, to individual staff needs or to the needs of pupils. New staff have induction partners to make sure they fully understand school procedures. Parents have access to a wide range of opportunities to help them support their children's learning. The school works fully in partnership with others to enhance provision for pupils. Resources are extremely well used to achieve outstanding value for money.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	3
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

2 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Toftwood Infant School, School Lane, Toftwood, East Dereham, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1LS

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting your school and meeting you all. Thank you for talking to me and showing me your work. I was very impressed by the way everyone in your school works together and the way you are all so interested in learning. You are all very well behaved. Your school is a very special place because your teachers really help you to feel special and to value each other.

All the adults at your school work hard to look after you so well and to help you learn. They make your learning fun. I wish I could have gone with you in the space ship to Houston! One thing I have asked your teachers to do is to make sure you write more neatly. This will help you to make even more progress than you do at the moment.

With best wishes,

Heather Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools