



# Tennyson Road Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 121862  
**Local Authority** Northamptonshire  
**Inspection number** 292244  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew McDowall HMI

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 address</b>	Highfield Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Rushden
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7		NN10 9QD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01933 314161
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	133	<b>Fax number</b>	01933 314161
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Roger Barnes
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Douglas Carline
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 4–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 6–7 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292244
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## **Introduction**

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

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller-than-average infant school. It serves an area of mixed social and private housing where levels of social deprivation are broadly average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average and almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds.

## **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. The key factors in its success are:

The strong teamwork, professionalism and shared commitment of all the staff.

The way in which the pupils are cared for, nurtured and treated as individuals.

The way in which assessment is used to promote good progress.

Standards and progress are good and improving. From a below-average starting point, almost all pupils go on to reach standards in line with national expectations, and many to exceed them. The school achieves this success because teaching and assessment are both good. These aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection. The progress pupils are making is carefully checked and appropriate action is taken to help those having difficulties. The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good. The teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to ensure each pupil makes good progress. Targets are set for each pupil but there are too few opportunities for the pupils to independently assess for themselves whether or not they have achieved their targets. The curriculum is good. The school gives a high priority to teaching basic skills and this serves the pupils well in preparing them for their next school and for later life.

During their time in school the pupils develop well as individuals. Their behaviour is good and they enjoy their time at school. There is a wide range of opportunities for the pupils to be involved in activities that broaden their understanding of the wider world. This helps them to understand their place in the community and to develop positive attitudes towards each other.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher delegates effectively. The strong approach to leadership and management has served the school well. Subject coordinators have grown in confidence and have high expectations of the pupils. The school has satisfactory systems to evaluate its own performance. The progress made by pupils is monitored very well but the staff do not receive the regular high quality feedback they need to help them to improve. The school is accurate in its self-evaluation but some of the targets it sets itself are too vague. Consequently, it is difficult for the leadership and management to assess how successful the school has been because they are not always clear enough about what they were setting out to achieve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to be more involved in assessing their own learning.
- Improve the quality of feedback the staff receive about their work to enable them to improve further.
- Sharpen up the planning for improvement to include more measurable targets so that the leadership and management can accurately evaluate the progress the school is making.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

When they start at the school, the children have a wide range of skills and abilities, with a significant proportion having below-average language and social skills. The school gives a high priority to developing these skills and all children make good progress in the Reception classes. By the time they move to Year 1, standards are broadly in line with national expectations, with some pupils exceeding them. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved steadily in recent years and are now good when compared to those reached by pupils nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in all subjects is above average. The school is increasingly successful in meeting the challenging targets it sets for pupils to achieve.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The school's supportive climate and high expectations ensure that pupils behave well. This is because they understand the school's code of conduct and know what is expected of them. Parents are very appreciative of this aspect of the school's work.

The school regularly consults the pupils and has adopted some of its ideas to improve the playground and dinner-time arrangements. Pupils are very excited about their new school council because this is providing further opportunities for their active involvement in the life of the school. They enjoy learning and they particularly value the high-profile awards presented in assemblies. Some said that it would be good if their parents could attend to see them receive their medals and certificates. Pupils enjoy each other's company. They play well together most of the time and help each other to overcome difficulties in lessons. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles whilst at school. They bring balanced packed lunches and have many opportunities to engage in physical activity. They enjoy the 'Activate' and 'Huff and Puff' daily exercise routines. As one pupil remarked, 'It gets my brain working'. Pupils are making good progress in literacy and numeracy and this prepares them well for their next school and for later life.

Personal development is good in many respects, although the pupils are not fully engaged in their own assessment and have too few opportunities to show independence in lessons. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A major strength is the way the teachers use assessment to promote good progress. Time is taken every Friday to identify where learning is not secure. This helps the pupils to consolidate what they need to know before moving on. The teachers and teaching assistants work very well together. Effective marking and other guidance in lessons, combined with carefully targeted support, ensure all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress.

Occasionally pupils are expected to spend too long listening to the teacher or there is insufficient time to evaluate learning. When these things happen, the lesson is less enjoyable and the pupils are unclear about what it is they have learned. Systems are developing to improve pupils' self-assessment. They are asked to evaluate how confident they are about what they have learned. Opportunities for pupils to say whether they feel they have achieved their targets are less frequent.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school adopts a flexible approach to planning the curriculum that successfully meets the needs of the pupils. The teaching of basic skills is systematic and results in good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Reception classes, the focus on developing early literacy and social skills pays dividends. These children are provided with a wide range of practical activities that stimulate them to talk. Real-life activities, for example, when they helped to care for a baby, promote good social and spiritual development.

The school is increasingly using information and communication technology (ICT) to motivate the pupils. For example, seeing the work of a visiting artist stimulated the pupils to produce simple animated films. The teaching of literacy through different subjects is good. A satisfactory range of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils are valued and respected as individuals. Consequently, they are relaxed in school and grow in confidence and achieve well. The teachers and classroom assistants successfully work together to keep pupils safe. The school carefully monitors the progress of each pupil and takes prompt action to provide support where necessary. Staff have been trained in child protection but the written guidance provided for them is in need of updating. Parents express very strong support for the care provided by the school. One parent said, 'It is so pleasing to know that, when they begin school, it is a loving and caring environment'.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school and are confident that they can speak to the staff about any problems.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership that has been instrumental in establishing the positive attitudes displayed by everyone in school. He has successfully built a team who share a strong commitment to do their best for the pupils and give willingly of their time and effort. Responsibilities are effectively delegated and subjects are very well led. Cooperation amongst staff has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. For example, the way in which assessment has improved demonstrates how, by working together, the staff have developed a common system that helps them to review the progress each pupil is making. This enables the school to take action when pupils are not doing well and results in the pupils making good progress.

The quality of the school's self-evaluation and the capacity for further improvement are satisfactory. These aspects of the school's work are not yet good because systems to check on and improve the quality of teaching are only satisfactory. Consequently, the teachers do not receive the high quality feedback they need to help them to improve further. In addition, the plans for improvement are not clear enough about the school's aspirations or how success will be measured.

Governance is satisfactory. The governors are very supportive and some are able to visit the school regularly and understand the workings of the school well. The committee structure is not wholly effective in enabling the governors to oversee all aspects of the work of the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	3
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

<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.

## 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	3
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**

Can I start by saying a big thank you to everyone we spoke to when we visited your school recently. We had a super time and, like you, we think you go to a good school.

Here are the things we liked the best.

- You behave well and help each other in the playground and in lessons.
- All the people working at the school really care for you.
- The teachers and all the other staff mark your work carefully and plan interesting and exciting lessons for you.
- We think you work hard and make good progress in your work. We saw some good writing in your books. Keep it up.
- Your headteacher and the staff work very well together and they have helped your school to improve since the last inspection.

As you can see, there are many things for you all to be proud of. There are three things we have asked the school to do to become even better. We have asked the staff to help you to learn how to mark your own work and check your own targets so you have a better idea about how well you are doing and what you need to do next to improve. We have suggested that the staff and the governors improve the way they plan for making the school even better. Finally we have asked the school to make sure the teachers are told how well they are doing more often.

Thanks again to everyone for making us so welcome.