

Tiffield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122031
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	292297
Inspection date	2 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Pringuer
Headteacher	Heather Goodall
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2003
School address	High Street South Tiffield Towcester NN12 8AB
Telephone number	01327 350325
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Tiffield is much smaller than most primary schools. The majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is significantly lower than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals are lower than average. Most children have attended pre-school playgroups and nursery schools before they enter Reception. Staffing has been relatively stable over the last few years and the headteacher has been in post since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Overall effectiveness is good. Pupils and most parents have a positive view of the school. Evidence of pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in attendance levels which are consistently above average. 'We like our school because it is small and friendly; we like everything about the school, but we would like a new classroom to replace the very old mobile.' These views were clearly expressed by a group of pupils from across the school.

Standards are above average and achievement is good. Attainment on entry to Reception varies with very small groups but generally meets national expectations overall with a few children above. Teaching is good overall although activities do not always provide enough challenge for more able pupils. Teaching is good in the infant class and Reception children make good progress. This good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and the majority of pupils are reaching above average standards overall by the end of Year 2. The progress of more able pupils is not as consistent as their peers, especially in mathematics. Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6 as a result of good teaching and pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6 in all core subjects. In science however, more able pupils do not make as much progress as they do in English and mathematics. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make the same progress as their peers.

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral and social development is good. The caring, family ethos contributes to the strong personal development. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the contribution they make to the school and local community. Their understanding of life in multicultural Britain is less well developed. Relationships are good and this contributes to the positive attitudes pupils have towards each other and their learning. Care, guidance and welfare are good and the learning environment is safe. There are good procedures in place to ensure academic progress is maintained and pupils experience good levels of care. All pupils learn to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum is satisfactory overall although the constraints of the building sometimes limit the way the curriculum is taught. Tasks provided are not consistently challenging to ensure the needs of the more able are fully met, especially in mathematics and science. Although the school has made good progress in raising standards in information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection, there are still some missed opportunities to enhance other subjects of the curriculum.

Leadership and management are good. The school runs effectively on a day-to-day basis and this contributes to the overall good achievement. Good self-evaluation provides an accurate analysis of areas for improvement. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the challenge for more able pupils consistently across the school.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.
- Extend current opportunities to prepare pupils better for living in a multicultural society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and achievement is good. Activities are well planned for reception children in the mixed age class and adults intervene and challenge them well. They make good progress and exceed national expectations at the end of their Reception Year. Pupils continue to make good gains overall in their learning in Years 1 and 2 and reach above average standards, as reflected in test results for 2005-6. However, more able pupils do not consistently make as good progress as their peers, especially in mathematics. Teachers use partner feedback well and this is helping to improve pupils' observation and speaking skills. Pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, as reflected in 2006 test results. More able pupils however do not make as much progress in science as they do in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress against their targets. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection as a result of better resources and improved teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils work and play well together. They are polite and demonstrate mature sensitivity to the needs and views of others. This is evident in class discussions and during discussion with visitors. Pupils have positive attitudes and their behaviour is good because the school's emphasis on developing these aspects has been very successful. As a result, the quality of relationships with peers and adults is good and is evident throughout the school. Pupils benefit from the wide range of physical activities and recognise their contribution to a healthy lifestyle. They know how to stay safe and enjoy taking responsibility as playground buddies. Pupils relish opportunities to be involved in their own target setting and evaluation. They learn to make a valuable contribution to the school and wider community because the school provides them with plenty of opportunities to consider the needs of others. They all learn to work well with each other and this combined with the good progress they make in literacy and numeracy prepares them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Children experience good quality teaching in Reception and this enables them to get off to a positive start. Teaching is good overall throughout the rest of the school. Planning is good and takes account of the different abilities of pupils in the class but it is not always sufficiently sharply focused to provide enough challenge to ensure that all more able pupils make consistently good progress in all subjects. Teachers use a range of strategies well such as partner feedback to capture pupils' interest and involve them in their learning. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties. The good assessment procedures enable teachers to check pupils' progress and give extra support to those who need it. Parents support their pupils' learning well and this contributes to the quality of their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Planning is detailed and appropriately matched to pupils' abilities except that tasks provided do not fully meet the needs of more able pupils. The use of ICT to enrich other subject areas has improved significantly since the last inspection but there are still some missed opportunities. The personal, social and health education programme contributes to the strong, caring ethos in the school. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties. All pupils benefit from French and swimming. Site limitations are addressed to ensure the delivery of the National Curriculum. The school effectively compensates for the lack of a hall. The small site does limit methods of curriculum delivery, although visits are used well to enhance the curriculum, for example the trip to Pocket Park to enrich environmental learning. There are strong links with the local community including the Church and village. The satisfactory range of clubs and activities, such as the after school club, are popular and well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff know and care for their pupils well and consequently pupils are happy and safe in school. Effective arrangements are in place for safeguarding pupils. Regular training is undertaken and all staff are aware of aspects of child protection. Relationships are good, which has a very positive impact on pupils and creates an atmosphere where problems can be discussed should they arise. Pupils with learning difficulties receive effective support because their individual education plans are well matched to their needs.

Support for academic development is good. Assessment is well used throughout the school to help pupils make progress. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is well organised but support for more able pupils is not as effective. All pupils have targets for English, mathematics and science. Pupils know their targets well and are encouraged to find evidence in their work to show they have reached their targets. They are clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Induction procedures are well considered and consequently new pupils settle in well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school well and manages the high numbers of part-time staff effectively. As a result Tiffield is a happy, friendly place where pupils and staff enjoy their time together because they all feel valued. There are appropriate plans for the next stage of development which is informed by a well considered review process of all aspects of the school's work, with the appropriate involvement of all staff and governors. The school has made good progress establishing procedures to track pupils' progress and it has good procedures to monitor teaching and learning. As a result, an analysis of test results in mathematics and English led to action being taken to improve teaching methods which in turn are having a positive impact on standards. However, tracking does not yet provide a sharp enough focus on the performance of more able pupils. Governors make a good contribution responding strategically to concerns such as the proposed new building. They have a good view of the school's strengths, relative weaknesses and development, and this allows them to play an important part in the school

development planning. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good; the Foundation Stage leader plans for and manages reception children well in the mixed age class.

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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>	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	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

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?	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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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.

Annex A

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

3 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tiffield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Towcester NN12 8AB

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. I enjoyed talking to you and your teachers. I will remember how courteous and considerate you were especially when we had our discussion after lunch. I really enjoyed visiting the swimming pool and seeing how you all enjoyed your swimming and was impressed by the progress you were all making. Keep it up; it is a valuable life skill.

These are the things I liked most about your school.

- When you first come to the school in Reception, you make a good start to your education and you do well as you progress through the school.
- Many of you said that yours is a good school and I agree with you.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun.
- You are all extremely polite, well behaved and consider the needs of others and this contributes to the friendly atmosphere. You told me that you all like being part of a small school.
- You enjoy school and all the activities, including those that take place outside the school day. These all help you learn to lead active, healthy lifestyles.
- Your school is well led and managed and this contributes to your enjoyment of school, and helps you feel safe and well cared for.

But to make things even better we have suggested three things that we think will help.

- Pupils who find the work easy should be given more challenging work.
- You should have more opportunities to use information and communication technology to help learning in all subjects.
- You should all be given more opportunities to learn about life in a multicultural society.

I wish you well for the future and remember to keep swimming.

Marion Wallace Lead inspector