



Two Gates Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 124156
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292907
Inspection dates 26–27 September 2006
Reporting inspector David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tamworth Road
School category	Community		Two Gates
Age range of pupils	3–11		Tamworth B77 1EN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01827 475051
Number on roll (school)	305	Fax number	01827 475056
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Julie Nicholls
		Headteacher	Nest Llewelyn-Cook
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	26–27 September 2006	292907

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Two Gates is a large primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well above average. Many of these pupils have very complex needs. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has recently changed from a system of putting pupils in classes according to their ability (setting), to one of mixed ability classes. The school was previously on two sites and is now on one. There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team, including a new headteacher, in the past 18 months.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Two Gates provides a satisfactory education. There have been clear signs of widespread underachievement in the past, which has only been reversed in the past 18 months through the good leadership by the headteacher. Pupils are now achieving satisfactorily. Standards generally are slightly below the national average but they are on an upward trend. As one pupil put it 'It's always improving and it's a much better place to be'. Children arrive at Nursery with expected standards and are now making good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in literacy and social skills, so their standards on joining Year 1 are now slightly above expectations. From then on, progress is satisfactory, as a result of satisfactory teaching. Last year, results in tests for Year 6 were the best for several years. Standards in English have improved significantly, as have the achievements of the lower attainers and those pupils with significant and long-term learning difficulties. Despite these improvements, higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics and science. Teaching is satisfactory. However, good teaching in the Foundation Stage quickly develops children's basic skills and gives them a good start. Throughout Years 3 to 6 lessons are planned well, but the plans do not always work in practice. Groups working with an adult make at least satisfactory progress, but other groups, usually the most able, do not make the progress they could because they do not always get the help they need. Pupils know that the group they work in has targets to meet, but these are not always appropriate for an individual pupil and do not allow teachers to accurately check the progress individual pupils have made. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They like school and develop a good sense of right and wrong, but their understanding of life in a multicultural society is relatively weak, because not enough attention is paid to this aspect when planning the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, and staff take good care of them. Despite having an understanding of a healthy diet it is not always evident in the packed lunches eaten at lunchtimes. All subject leaders are now heavily involved in checking that things are improving, so the school's managers have a clear idea of what needs to be improved. The good systems for evaluating the school's work are successfully bringing about significant improvements in academic standards. Nevertheless, much still remains to be done to ensure the areas of relative weakness mentioned above are improved, and, at present, leadership and management are satisfactory. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but the big improvements in achievement over the past year and a half in particular demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to continue its improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all groups, but especially the most able in mathematics and science, receive sufficient guidance and support for them to make as much progress as other groups.
- Ensure that the targets set for pupils are suitable for them as individuals and that teachers have systems for checking that the targets are met.

- Increase the opportunities pupils have to learn about living in a multicultural society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils do well in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their social development and their language and literacy skills. In the past, their good start has not been built on sufficiently in later years, so there have been clear signs of underachievement. This has now been corrected, and all pupils now make broadly satisfactory progress. Standards are now slightly below average. The school has worked hard to improve standards, and this has paid off in English where standards are now much better than they were 18 months ago. Standards have also improved in mathematics and science, but more remains to be done in these subjects, where the higher attainers in particular could still do better through being given consistently more challenging work. The biggest success has been in the improved performance of lower attainers and especially those with significant learning difficulties. All of these pupils now achieve as well as other pupils and reach the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in the basic skills that will prepare them for later life. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, keep fit and what is needed for a healthy diet. Despite this, however, at lunchtime there are large quantities of crisps, chocolate and fizzy drinks evident in packed lunches. The majority behave well in class and on the playground. They work cooperatively with adults and each other. However, a minority of pupils have not yet learnt well enough the skill of living in a community and sometimes misbehave. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong, but their understanding of life in our multicultural society is relatively weak. Pupils enjoy coming to school and robust procedures to check on absentees and promote regular attendance ensure that attendance is satisfactory. A small number of long-term absentees depress the overall figures. Occasionally, a small number of pupils are removed from school for holidays during term time which results in their progress being affected as they miss valuable lessons.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The systematic approach to teaching basic skills means that good progress is made, especially in language and literacy. In other years, tasks are always planned to meet the needs of pupils, but for some groups, the

plans do not necessarily work. Classes are often split into three groups. The groups who work with an adult often get on well, but the third group, usually the higher attainers who work independently, do not get enough attention. Their progress is not checked frequently enough to make sure the work they are doing is at the right level. The lack of attention also leaves some pupils either confused about what they should be doing or not receiving enough guidance to make sure they are moved on quickly enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

As a result of a radical overhaul in the last year the school now provides a satisfactory curriculum more in tune with the needs of different groups of pupils. Nevertheless, the most able pupils sometimes receive work which is a bit too easy for them. The most significant improvement has been to the curriculum for lower attainers and those with learning difficulties, who are now supported well in lessons and make the same progress as others. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good, with a stress on learning basic skills, how to get on with each other and the need for rules. In other years, there is a good emphasis on understanding right from wrong, but too little time is devoted to teaching about other cultures that are represented in Britain today. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good range of extra clubs and activities from which to choose.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Care for pupils is good. All staff value and respect children as the school motto 'Love children, love learning' suggests. Good links with parents and outside agencies safeguard the most vulnerable pupils including those with complex needs that result in them having a statement of special educational need. A particular strength is 'The Den' where pupils in need of extra support are helped to modify their behaviour, helped by good links with support agencies. Support and guidance for pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Teaching assistants are used well to support those with learning difficulties. Systems are in place to track pupils' progress and ensure they meet challenging group targets. However, the group targets are not always appropriate for individual pupils. As a result, there are occasions when individual pupils are not given sufficient guidance about what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, as a result of satisfactory leadership and management. There were signs of underachievement that were not spotted by governors, because they were not well enough informed about standards. Over the past 18 months or so, the school's managers have got to grips

with the school's weaknesses and have halted the decline. The headteacher has carried out a thorough review of academic standards, well supported by subject leaders. Her good leadership, together with good systems for checking on the school's work, has ensured that all in the school, including governors, now have a clear idea of what needs to be improved, and the capacity to take effective action. There are clear signs of significant improvement in standards and achievement, but much still needs to be done in other areas such as pupils' cultural development and the variation in the progress of different groups within classes. Nevertheless, the improvements made in the recent past bode well for the future.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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	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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	2
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	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

Thank you for helping us when we came to visit your school. We very much enjoyed talking to you about your life at school. You were very clear about what you liked and what you wanted changing. Many of you told us that the school is getting better and better. We agree with you. You are learning more than you did in the past and are happy at school. Your teachers take good care of you and make sure you are safe. Overall you are getting a satisfactory education but there are a few things that the school could do better. We think you could still learn more in some lessons. Often you work in groups. When an adult is working with your group, you get on well. If there is no adult, you sometimes do not know what you are supposed to do. So we have asked teachers to make sure that you get work that is just hard enough for you, and that they check that you are getting on with it. You know your targets for the groups you work in, but sometimes the same target is not quite right for everyone in the group. So we have asked the teachers to give you each a target, which will help them check that you are learning as quickly as you can. The other thing we have asked the teachers to do is to tell you more about how people live in other parts of the country. Some things have got a lot better over the last year. You are learning to read and write more quickly than you used to, for example. You can help the school by making sure you come to school whenever possible and asking your parents to give you healthier packed lunches. We hope you enjoy yourselves even more over the coming years and thank you again for your help.