

Tuddenham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124716
Local Authority	SUFFOLK
Inspection number	293085
Inspection date	18 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Jackie Cousins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Christine Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Kathryn McMurtary
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2003
School address	The Street Tuddenham St Mary Bury St. Edmunds Suffolk IP28 6SA
Telephone number	01638713036
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a few that are from minority ethnic groups. Most start with basic skills that are below those typically found in this age-group. A significant number of pupils who find learning more difficult or who have a statement of special educational need attend the school. Similarly, substantial numbers of pupils start at the school part way through the taught year. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is significantly below average. No pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tuddenham Primary is a good school. The headteacher's leadership is effective and places considerable importance on developing really strong relationships with parents, other agencies and the community. This means that a very good partnership is in place to promote pupils' well-being. They settle quickly into school life, whether they are starting at the beginning of the Reception year or arrive part way through the taught year. Virtually all parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school. One parent said, 'I never imagined finding a school that takes such amazing care of my son. He has grown so much over the past year and enjoys school very much! The staff are wonderful!' Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are welcomed and included well in all school activities. The school's leadership works really well to draw the community together.

Achievement is good because the school's leadership ensures that improving pupil's learning and progress are at the centre of everything it does. Children in the Reception class get off to an effective start because leadership of this phase is good and because lessons are imaginative and well planned, and make good use of resources and outside areas. Good teaching and learning allow pupils to make good progress in key skills across Years 1 to 4, enabling them to be on track to meet national expectations when they leave in Year 4. The curriculum is good and is much enhanced by the range of extra curricular activities open to pupils and by the school's use of specialist teaching to develop pupils' subject skills. However, pupils' progress is not sufficiently tracked from one year to the next. Occasionally, teachers' marking and feedback to pupils are too general and do not explain to them how to improve their work.

Pupil's personal development is good. This is mostly as a result of the effective care, guidance and support they receive from all staff. Pupils are very happy in school and enjoy all the activities available. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, as is behaviour. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion and understand how to keep themselves safe. Their adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding, with many pupils eating fruit at least twice day, a practice fully endorsed and encouraged by the school. The school provides over two hours of physical education each week and swimming is a key component of the curriculum during the summer term.

Leadership and management are effective and have ensured all staff work as a closely knit team. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement and has brought about good improvement since the last inspection. For example, attendance is now in line with expectations. Governors are very supportive and discharge their statutory and other responsibilities well, holding the school appropriately to account, although the school development plan does not consistently contain specific and measurable targets. Nonetheless, the school gives good value for money and is in an effective position to continue to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the tracking of pupils' progress from one year to the next.
- Develop the quality of feedback for pupils so that they know what they have done well and how to improve their work.
- Improve the use of specific targets in school development planning so that the school can evaluate its success more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. The school has a high proportion of pupils who join part way through the taught year and does well to ensure that most make good progress. Many pupils start at school with levels of skill in basic subjects which are below expectations. They achieve well in the Reception class and so standards are in line with expectations by the start of Year 1. This is because staff have high expectations of pupils.

Results in teacher assessments in Year 2 vary considerably from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year group. In 2006 results in Year 2 were exceptionally high, with more able pupils performing particularly well. Last year approximately half the pupils attained above expected levels of skill in reading and writing and one third did so in mathematics. Standards are average in the present Year 2 and meet with expectations in Year 4 but these pupils have made good progress from their below average starting point. The present Year 4 has a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties but they receive very effective support and are progressing well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups also make good progress. All pupils are therefore soundly prepared for the next stage of education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respect others' beliefs, raise significant sums for charity and are well prepared for life in a multicultural society. Pupils from different backgrounds play harmoniously together. Behaviour is good and pupils cooperate really well. They concentrate effectively and have positive attitudes to their learning. They have a really clear understanding of what is right and wrong. English lessons, in particular, are used very cleverly to help pupils explore moral issues, such as the ill treatment of animals.

Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils really enjoy school, largely because staff are enthusiastic about learning and manage them well. Pupils' self-esteem is high as a result of the positive ways that staff speak to them and encourage them to have a go at new activities. Children's personal development in the Foundation Stage is good. Their independence is developed effectively. Pupils learn to work together well because the staff manage them very well. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. The school is careful to take note of pupils' views and, because this is a small school, is able to encourage all to make suggestions about how to improve things. For example, they were fully involved in the purchase of new equipment for the playground to encourage them to become healthier.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use effective teaching methods, particularly in the Foundation Stage, which challenge pupils and ensures they make good progress. Teachers use questioning and learning objectives very effectively to deepen pupil's understanding, as for example, in an English lesson where pupils were asked to consider whether they had included sufficient adjectives and specific vocabulary to enhance the quality of their poems. The teaching of pupils, who find learning harder, is well matched to their needs. Their individual education plans are good and contain specific, relevant and measurable targets.

Pupils' rate of learning is good because resources are used imaginatively. Teachers' use of assessment is good but the use of marking and other feedback is not always effective in spelling out what pupils have got right and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs effectively. It offers pupils a well-planned, rich and interesting variety of learning activities. It links areas of learning together effectively so that pupils develop several skills at one time. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The use of the outside area has been enhanced by the provision of a shaded area so that children can extend their learning in the fresh air safely. Letters and numbers are displayed effectively so that children become engrossed in learning literacy and numeracy skills. Elsewhere in the school, the use of specialist teaching is very motivating, particularly in art, where Year 3 and 4 pupils create wonderful jungle pictures in the style of Henri Rousseau. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support pupil's learning in many areas. A record of gifted and talented pupils is kept and appropriately demanding activities are provided for them in after school activities. Occasionally, planning does not set specific extension activities for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Pupils are often taught in small groups and this ensures that they form very secure relationships with staff and other pupils. Throughout the school pupils' personal needs are extremely well looked after. Staff ensure pupil's health and safety excellently. All legal requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are met. The school places a high emphasis on tolerance and respect for others which is developed through regular discussion times. Pupils' transition to the middle school is handled effectively.

The school offers satisfactory guidance to pupils. Their academic progress is reviewed regularly by staff. Pupils' targets are reviewed every term and new ones are set. However, their progress is not effectively tracked from one year to the next and so the school is not clear about what proportion of pupils make satisfactory or good progress each year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the headteacher is perceptive and forward thinking. She heads an effective senior management team united in their aim to provide the highest quality education. Parents are quick to acknowledge the quality of the school's leadership, one saying 'In only a short time it has been very clear to us how very well run the school is. The high standards from pupils and staff are very clear.' Senior leaders are fully involved in evaluating the school's quality and impact and are keen to develop provision to even higher levels. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's work and is able to hold it to account effectively. The school development plan does not always identify precise targets which it could use to measure its success. The leadership of pupils with learning difficulties is very good and so the attainment of these pupils is carefully monitored. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The use of the outside area has been enhanced by the provision of more stimulating pieces of equipment. For example, climbing apparatus which allows pupils to develop their hand grip and arm strength.

Annex A

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	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	3
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	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	1
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	3

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.

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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tuddenham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Thank you for welcoming me into your school. I enjoyed watching lessons, looking at some of your work and displays and talking to you. You go to a good school. These are the good things about your school.

- You really enjoy all the school activities.
- Your behaviour is good.
- Your headteacher has effective ideas about how to improve the school.
- Teaching is good and staff work hard to allow you to make effective progress.
- Teachers and staff care for you very well.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. These are the most important things.

- Improving the way that the school tracks your progress.
- Developing the feedback that teachers give you so that you are clearer about what you have done well and could do to improve.
- Improving the way that the school assesses how successful it has been in making things even better.

Keep working hard and enjoying the many things you do at Tuddenham Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins