



Tameside Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131735
Local Authority Sandwell
Inspection number 293834
Inspection dates 12–13 December 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	Price Road
School category	Community		Wednesbury
Age range of pupils	3–11		WS10 0EZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 5560340
Number on roll (school)	402	Fax number	0121 5052736
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Bates
		Headteacher	G Linford
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	12–13 December 2006	293834

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school serves a disadvantaged area of Wednesbury. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Tameside provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Children start Nursery with standards that are exceptionally low. Their achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in all other years; nevertheless, they leave with exceptionally low standards. Progress in reading and writing is good, so standards are better in English, by the time they leave, than they are in mathematics and science. Although teaching is satisfactory, pupils often spend too long at the start of a lesson going over previous work, rather than learning something new. Teaching assistants work well with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and consequently these pupils make good progress. For middle-ability pupils, the work can often be too easy or too hard in mathematics and science, so their progress is slower.

Pupils like coming to school. They particularly enjoy the range of clubs and visits available to them, which are a good feature of the otherwise satisfactory curriculum. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory because the arrangements for care, guidance and support are adequate. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They have a good understanding of what it means to be part of a community but their attendance falls well below average. Although new initiatives have been put into place this term, the school's managers have not placed enough emphasis on raising the profile of good attendance both with pupils and with specific families who account for much of the absence. In other respects, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has made steady progress since it was last inspected, but the pace of change is now increasing as actions to improve performance start to bear fruit. Improvements over the past year or so clearly show that the school's managers have the capacity to take the school to the next level.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards through improving the quality of teaching, ensuring that less time is spent revising at the start of lessons and that work given to middle-ability pupils in mathematics and science is more closely matched to their needs.
- Ensure pupils and parents are aware of the importance of good attendance, especially in the case of specific families responsible for high rates of absence.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children start Nursery with exceptionally low standards and make satisfactory progress in all years but still leave with exceptionally low standards. Boys' standards are lower than girls', but this reflects their lower starting points, and they actually make slightly better progress than girls. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science but good progress in reading and writing, where standards are now closer to average at the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress for other pupils is satisfactory, although middle-ability pupils

tend to make slower progress than others. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in the basic skills that they will need in later life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Nearly all pupils get on well together, form good relationships with the adults in the school and work hard. Pupils are very polite and aware of others and, for example, hold doors for other pupils and adults. Children make good progress in their personal development in the Foundation stage. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say they know they are safe at school and have someone to turn to if there is a problem. Pupils know how to stay healthy, but do not always put their good intentions into practice. Too many stand around at playtime eating sweets and crisps. They know how to stay safe, and keep an eye out for each other at breaks. Pupils have a good understanding of how to play a part in the community. For example, they raise money for charities and take their responsibilities, such as being a member of a school house, seriously by endeavouring to gain points for their house.

Most pupils behave well in lessons but a small number have difficulty controlling their actions, which has led to a fairly high number of exclusions. Attendance is satisfactory overall and is average for the local area. Nevertheless, it is well below the national average and too many pupils have poor records of attendance. Many of these pupils come from specific families who are responsible for much of the absenteeism.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers manage their classes well, so there are rarely any instances of pupils' learning being disrupted. The beginnings of lessons are a relative weakness. Pupils often spend too long sitting at the front going over previous work, when they could be moving on to an activity where they learn something new. Teaching assistants work well with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Their probing questions encourage the pupils to think for themselves, without receiving too many hints. This helps these pupils to make faster progress than others in the class.

The work set is generally appropriate for the lower and higher attainers in the class, but there is a large group in the middle-ability range for whom the work can sometimes be either too easy or too hard. This is especially true in mathematics and science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers use themes to increase interest in topics and lessons. This approach has improved achievement because pupils see more relevance to the material they are

learning and enjoy it more. However, the curriculum plans do not always draw the distinction between what skills are to be taught and the activities that are used to teach them. This leads to some pupils being unclear about why they are doing a particular task.

A good feature is the way the curriculum is enriched by the wide range of clubs and visits. Clubs are attended well and trips are highly rated. During the inspection, Year 6 visited a mosque. One pupil was scared about entering, because he was worried about what he had been told would be inside. The visit really opened his eyes. He spent the whole morning talking to the Imam and had his understanding of another religion changed completely.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Risk assessments, especially of visits, and effective child protection procedures help to ensure pupils' safety. Staff place a high priority on caring for pupils. The recently established nurture group is having a positive impact on the minority of pupils who have difficulty controlling their behaviour.

Pupils know their targets and use them when they are doing their work. However, teachers do not consistently give them written guidance on how they can make their work better, nor do they ensure that they make up the work missed through absence.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has slowly but surely been improving since it was last inspected. In particular, standards in English have got closer to the national average. The school came close to meeting its challenging target for English, but fell short in mathematics in 2006. More initiatives have been put into place over the past year or so, and these are showing signs of increasing the rate of improvement. Attendance, on the other hand, has fallen recently, because not enough emphasis has been placed on stressing and encouraging good attendance both with pupils and parents. Overall, the school's managers have a realistic view of its performance. However, the role of middle managers in checking on, and improving, the school's work is underdeveloped, so there are variations in the extent to which improvements are made between subjects. Where management is good, such as in the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there is a clear impact on the progress made by pupils. At a whole-school level, too little attention is paid to checking on the progress of boys and girls so the school does not get an accurate picture of any differences in achievement. The school now has good systems for analysing progress in English and mathematics, but the same systems have not been implemented for science.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	2

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	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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?	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	3
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 very much for talking to us when we visited your school. You impressed us with your good manners and friendly welcome. We think you play a good role in the school, especially through the school council. You told us that you like all the clubs and visits. We can see why, because you get more chances to take part in different activities than we often see. You know about keeping fit and healthy, but don't follow your own advice. You could help yourselves by not bringing sweets and crisps to eat at playtime, and having a good run around instead.

We found that your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means it does some things well and has nothing of real importance wrong with it. Nevertheless, there are one or two things it could do better. You learn to read and write faster than we often see, but you do not learn so quickly in mathematics and science. So we have asked your teachers to spend less time at the start of lessons going over work that you have already done, and instead give you new things to learn. We have also asked them to make sure that the work is not too easy or too hard for you.

One thing we were not too impressed with was how often you come to school. Some of you do not come to school every day, when you are not ill. So we have asked the people who run the school to explain to you, and your mums and dads, how important it is to come to school whenever you can. You can help them by always making every effort to come to school.

Thank you again for your welcome, and best wishes for your future.