

Trafalgar Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102901
Local Authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	308156
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Westgarth
Headteacher	Mrs L Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Elmsleigh Road Twickenham TW2 5EG
Telephone number	020 8894 5729
Fax number	020 8893 3042

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and investigated the following issues: the extent to which the children make good progress during their time at the school, and the way in which skills are planned, tracked and measured through the curriculum. The inspector met with children, held meetings with staff and the chair of governors, and scrutinised a range of documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Trafalgar Infant is a three-form entry school occupying two sites. The Reception Year share a building with a private nursery and the Key Stage 1 building is adjacent to the junior school. The proportion of children taking a free school meal is less than half the national average. Over one third of the children come from a range of cultural backgrounds including Pakistani, African and Indian heritages. At almost 20%, an above average proportion of children speak English in addition to other languages, although the majority are not at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children with a learning difficulty and / or disability is well below the national average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with a range of skills, mostly above those expected for their age. The school has awards for Investors in People, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Trafalgar Infant is a good school with outstanding capacity to make further improvements. The school benefits from having a staff team that have generally been at the school for some time and work very well together. A particular feature of the good leadership and management is that staff at all levels of responsibility are closely involved in school improvement. The staff also work extremely well in partnership with others. Senior leaders have responsibilities that take them beyond school, collaborating with teacher training colleges, other schools and Early Years providers to share expertise and develop their practice. The school works equally well with parents and carers, who are very appreciative of the school's provision for their children. Over half returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and many gave additional comments. They are especially pleased with the way that the staff communicate with families, and say that their children are happy and do well during their time at the infant school. This was confirmed during the inspection. Children are extremely pleased to be in school. They are excited by the work that they do in lessons and make good progress from their individual starting points. For many this leads to standards of work that are exceptionally high in relation to national averages. In 2007, the proportion of children reaching Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was twice the national average in writing and mathematics and almost as high for reading. Most children from different ethnic backgrounds attain equally well and sometimes do better than other children in the school.

Children attain exceptionally high standards and make good progress because two particular aspects of the schools work are outstanding. These are the curriculum and the care, guidance and support that the children receive from staff. The curriculum is very well planned with a focus on developing skills. This is achieved through themes that are interlinked throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. This effectively helps the children to build upon previous learning and provides them with many opportunities to practise their skills across all relevant aspects of the curriculum. For example, drama and music provided the children with exciting ways to investigate the social contexts of the fire of London. Curriculum plans also provide good opportunities for personal development, effectively enabling the children to develop good personal skills and outstanding awareness of personal health and safety. Another strength of the curriculum lies in the extensive range of themed weeks, local visits and visitors to the school. This not only brings topics alive to the children through practical activities, but also contributes well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers use curriculum plans well to deliver lessons that interest and motivate the children. In turn, the children take their learning very seriously. They are inquisitive and keen to make their contribution in discussions. They show great pride in their work, which is very well presented and provides a good record of what has been learned. The quality of their cursive handwriting is particularly impressive. Teaching is consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, enabling the children to make good progress in their learning. In the very best lessons, teachers skilfully involve the children throughout the session with ample opportunities to reflect upon and assess what they are doing. This is not yet of consistently high quality in all lessons and is an area that the staff are developing together.

The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support ensures that the children are safe, happy and do well in school. Regular meetings and joint curriculum planning between the Foundation Stage coordinator and Key Stage 1 teachers ensures continuity for the children when they transfer to Year 1, not only in their learning but also in their personal development. Throughout

the school, staff give the children very good feedback on how well they are working. As a result, the children speak confidently about what they have learned and why it is important. Regular discussions amongst staff ensure that any concerns or potential underachievement are identified early on and the inclusion coordinator carefully tracks the progress of those who require additional support.

The way in which the headteacher, staff and governors work together to identify how well the school is performing is key to its success. They continually challenge one another to identify areas for improvement. They can demonstrate that actions taken are very securely founded on good evaluations from available information, including setting targets for the children based on appropriate challenge. In addition, they can show that the actions taken have had a very positive impact on raising children's attainment.

Leaders and managers quite rightly look to validate their views through external sources, gaining reaccreditation for a range of awards over the past two years. The current focus on identifying exactly what it is that will enable them to become an outstanding school is an appropriate one. Although self-evaluation is accurate, the school does not yet have a clear view about how to judge when aspects of provision and progress are outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception classes have moved into the purpose-built Early Years Centre since the last inspection. This has improved the provision and enhanced pre-school links with an independent nursery within the same building. The classrooms and outside areas provide bright, purposeful learning environments that enable teachers to plan an extensive range of activities to cover all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum very well. There is a good balance of directed and self-initiated work, made possible by clear planning of the curriculum. The children are very settled and confident in their relationships with staff. They make good progress in all aspects of development during the Reception Year, with most children exceeding the Early Learning Goals, preparing them very well for Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons have sufficient opportunities to engage the children more fully in their learning.
- Establish a clear view about how to judge when provision and progress are outstanding.

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

10 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Trafalgar Infant School, Twickenham, TW2 5EG

I am writing to say a big thank you to you all for the help that you gave to me when I came at the end of February to inspect your school. I was very pleased to come to Yellow Room's assembly and to see all the good work that they did last half term. I especially enjoyed the singing and drama about the fire of London. My special thanks also go to the school council. Our meetings helped me to get a good picture of your school.

I think that Trafalgar Infant is a good school and that some of the things that happen in school are excellent. The staff take very good care of you and they also make lessons interesting. Many of you told me how much you enjoy the lessons and when I looked in your books I was very impressed with the way that you finish your work. I was also very pleased to see how well you join your handwriting. Mrs Thompson, the staff and governors are always looking for ways to make your school even better. I have asked them to think about how to turn your school from a good school to an excellent one and to make sure that you have more time in lessons to work things out for yourself and think about how well you are doing.

Please pass on my thanks to your families for the helpful comments that they sent to me.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector