

Turves Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103369
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	308295
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan E Lowry

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	395
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	106
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Nicholls
Headteacher	Matthew Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Northfield Birmingham B31 4BP
Telephone number	01214 643686
Fax number	01214 766957

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a larger than average primary school built on a large site. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. There is a high proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as a high number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, and the school also has designated provision for up to six children with physical difficulties. There is currently no Nursery provision on the site. The headteacher has been in post for one year following a period of acting headship, although he has been part of the school's senior leadership team for a number of years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Turves Green Primary is a satisfactory school with some good features, including provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and pupils' personal development and well-being. There is a very strong ethos of pastoral care and inclusion which is evident throughout the school. As a consequence of thoughtful development of the environment, coupled with the staff's approach, the reception area is a warm and welcoming place which helps families and visitors feel comfortable as they enter school. Parents' views of school are overwhelmingly positive and many speak of the approachability of staff and that the school is 'one big happy family'.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Pupils enter the EYFS with skills below the expected levels and make good progress to attain average standards by the end of the EYFS. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1. There is, however, some unevenness in this progress across the school, with pupils making better progress in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. This unevenness is also apparent within subjects, with pupils attaining less well in mathematics in Key Stage 2. The school has made many improvements in the last year to ensure that by the end of Year 6 all pupils attain average standards. To achieve these improvements, there has been a focus on personalised learning through the introduction of individual targets as well as a drive to ensure consistency in teaching practice. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily. The school ensures that these pupils are fully included in the life of the school and that all are able to access the curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching observed. Where the teaching is good, there is effective use of individual pupil targets, work is well matched to pupils' different learning needs and in these instances, marking guides pupils well. However, the new marking policy is not yet used consistently throughout school. As a result of school improvement work that has been undertaken, teaching and learning shows increasing consistency of approach, which has had a positive impact on standards and progress. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards and interactive teaching methods to motivate and stimulate pupils. Throughout the school, staff have consistently high expectations for behaviour and for good manners. Consequently, the school is a very well ordered, relaxed and happy place to be. The school is a safe place in which to learn and pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other and particularly of pupils with physical difficulties.

The school is beginning to develop a richer curriculum. Some work has already begun on developing a more cross-curricular approach to learning. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school is also changing the approach to the curriculum in Year 1, which has helped the transition from the Reception Year.

The pupils' good personal development and well-being is a direct result of the staff's caring approach to learners and the importance placed on inclusion. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins this area of the school's life. Pupils are well cared for and there is good pastoral support. Academic guidance is currently less strong, although this is improving.

Leadership and the management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has a passion and vision for the school which is infectious. He is well supported by a senior leadership team who show an understanding of where the school needs to develop. Improvement has already been demonstrated, particularly in the EYFS and in Key Stage 1. As yet, the senior leadership team is not using the assessment data now available to them to place high enough expectations

on pupils nor to focus their monitoring of teaching and learning on pupils' progress towards meeting challenging targets. The school shows a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the EYFS with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the time children enter Year 1 they have attained broadly average standards. There has been significant improvement in the children's language and communication skills in the past year and this is as a result of a new approach to the teaching of phonics. The EYFS is a vibrant, purposeful environment where there is plenty of children's work colourfully

displayed. There is effective use made of the dedicated outdoor space. Teaching is good and children spend their time actively involved in learning, with a good range of activities on offer. There are plenty of opportunities for children to work together, independently or with the adults who support them. The children show a high level of independence within the classroom and this enables effective classroom organisation. Children are able to make their own choices as to the activities they will complete and can sequence their choices. Adults therefore spend little time organising the children and more time involved in learning. There is very effective deployment of teaching assistants and the adults work well as a team to improve the outcomes for children. The attention paid to the welfare of children is good. There is very clear communication between adults and this ensures that the individual needs of children are identified, shared and then met. Leadership of the EYFS is good and demonstrates that individual children's progress is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen assessment procedures and make rigorous use of the resulting information to accelerate the progress made by all pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure that the new marking policy is fully implemented so that pupils are given consistent guidance on the next steps for learning
- Ensure leaders and managers clearly focus their monitoring and evaluation on raising standards and expectations for pupils' learning.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The level of children's skills on entry to the school is below those expected for their age. They make good progress and by the end of Key Stage 1 reach average standards. During Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6 they attain average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. The school has worked together on a number of school improvement initiatives, which has brought about positive change. Children in the EYFS and pupils in Key Stage 1 have been making steady improvements in standards over the last few years and provisional data available for 2008, as well as evidence demonstrated by the school, show standards attained by pupils in Key Stage 2 have risen significantly to bring them in line with national averages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is a strength of the school. Behaviour throughout the school is good. When moving between lessons or going to assembly, the corridors are filled with polite, well-mannered children who show kindness and respect towards each other, whatever their needs or difficulties. There is a quiet expectation that pupils will behave well and they, in turn, respond well. The school is a safe place and the numerous security arrangements mean that the large site is a secure one. Children clearly enjoy their school life. Attendance is satisfactory and the school does much to encourage consistent attendance by using an electronic display in the reception area to update parents as to weekly attendance rates. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of the school's life are all good, and are reflected in the pupils'

good attitudes to learning. Pupils are well aware of healthy living and they clearly enjoy the healthy brunch which is available at morning break. The school council makes a good contribution to the school and members take their role very seriously. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils throughout the school are well placed to learn: they behave well, they are clear about rules and routines and exhibit good attitudes to learning. Teachers throughout the school work hard to implement a consistent approach to teaching and learning which is beginning to impact positively on standards. All teachers are now using learning outcomes, success criteria and individualised targets to enable pupils to make the best possible progress. There is also good use of different ways of working, for instance children work in pairs, groups and as independent learners. Teaching assistants are key players in this school and some very good supportive work was seen, although some teaching assistants lack the subject knowledge to be fully effective. All teachers mark work frequently, however the new marking policy has yet to be consistently used throughout school. Sometimes marking is used to good effect and shows learners what they need to do next, but at times it merely encourages learners with words of praise. Similarly, teachers are not yet using the assessment data available to consistently create targets for their pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets all statutory requirements and is broad and balanced. The school recognises that a cross-curricular approach to learning has more relevance to learners and it is used to good effect in some parts of the school. However, currently, the curriculum is generally organised into separate subjects. A new approach to teaching and learning and the curriculum, which focuses on the next steps for learning, is being implemented in school and is having many positive outcomes for pupils. The focus on literacy and numeracy targets within lessons in all subjects is beginning to have a positive impact on the standard of basic skills. Some extra-curricular activities, such as circus skills, enhance the pupils' enjoyment as well as equipping them with skills. However, there is currently a limited number and range of clubs on offer.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All safeguarding checks are in place. The school's procedures to identify and support vulnerable pupils are particularly good and are secure and rigorous. Teaching assistants working with vulnerable children have an important role in school. They ensure that pupils feel settled and ready to learn, and their relationship goes beyond that of helping the child to practise their reading skills. Pastoral care is particularly strong and the inclusion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a strength of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has an exuberant style which is borne out of his enthusiasm and love for the school and the education it provides. His vision is clear and it is communicated well. The new senior leadership team effectively translates this vision into plans to improve different aspects of the school's work. The recent appointment of an additional member has done much to enhance this leadership team. However, while demonstrating some improvement, senior leaders have not yet had sufficient time to demonstrate the full extent of their effectiveness. The school has a satisfactory understanding of itself, but does not yet use data well enough to help the senior leadership team to come to more informed judgements. The assessment system provides some good information and assists leaders in planning school improvement, but it is not yet accessible enough for teaching staff, nor are some of the targets which are drawn from this information high enough. The governing body is led well, and is aware of the issues facing the school. Governors do much to challenge the work of the school, although they recognise that they need to ask even more probing questions. Community cohesion is good. The school supports the community by hosting 'Toddlerobics', an inclusive activity session for pre-school children, including those with physical difficulties. It offers very good support to families who are experiencing difficulties. The school is also a training school for both NVQs and trainee teachers.

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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?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Turves Green Primary School, Birmingham, B31 4BP

My colleagues and I would like to thank you all for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. You were all so polite, helpful and respectful and we particularly liked the ways in which you behaved towards one another.

We found that you are making satisfactory progress and reach standards that are in line with those seen in other schools. We saw that you are trying to improve your writing in all subjects and liked the way that you used your writing targets in all of your subjects. We think that the teachers' marking sometimes helps you to learn from your mistakes, but this is not always the case, and we have asked the school to improve marking so it gives you good guidance on how to improve. We thought that you were not doing so well in mathematics, although you seem to have made some improvements in the last year, and we have asked the school to use the information it has on how well you are doing to help you to make more rapid progress.

All the adults in school care very much about you and they demonstrate this in the way that they speak to you and in how much time and support that they give to you. It is good to see that many of you come to school every day and the display in the school reception area shows that more and more of you now come to school regularly. We think that you behave well in school and that you show a great deal of respect for adults. We really appreciated that you held doors open for us and that you were very polite.

Your headteacher knows how to help you and has been working towards improving the ways in which you are taught. We have asked him and the teachers to challenge you even further and to make careful checks to help you to reach high standards. We have seen that you have risen to some of the challenges that have been placed before you but we think that you could do even more. You can help your headteacher by continuing to listen to your teachers and aspiring to attain the very highest standards. Keep looking ahead.

Best wishes for the future.

Susan E Lowry Lead inspector