

Tidbury Green School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104065
Local Authority	Solihull
Inspection number	308497
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Alwyne Jolly

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Roach
Headteacher	Yvonne McHale
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2004
School address	Dickens Heath Road Tidbury Green Solihull B90 1QW
Telephone number	01564 823189
Fax number	01564 829308

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school situated close to Solihull. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average. There have been four headteachers and numerous staff changes since 2004. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Tidbury Green School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. A high level of staff turnover at all levels has meant the school has been through an unsettled period resulting in fluctuating standards. The school is improving satisfactorily now that staffing is more stable. Effective provision in the Foundation Stage is providing children with a good start to their education. Progress through the rest of the school has been uneven, but is now more consistent. The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Standards by the time pupils leave school have remained in line with the national average for the last few years. Pupils' attainment in English is above average by Year 6. Standards in mathematics, however, particularly in the key skills of practical investigation, are not as good as they should be. Pupils of all abilities generally achieve appropriately, except in writing in Years 1 and 2 where more able pupils do not attain the standards of which they are capable. A satisfactory curriculum ensures pupils' learning develops satisfactorily through well planned lessons that have a clear focus. The key skills of literacy and numeracy and other subjects are taught satisfactorily, which gives pupils a secure grounding for the next stage of education and beyond. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. However, they do not give pupils enough advice on how they can improve or share targets for learning with them.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a very clear grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, which has enabled her to outline an effective short-term and long-term vision. She has received good support from the governors, who take a keen interest in the school and are equally committed to bringing about the necessary improvement.

Parents are pleased with the way the school cares for their children, typified by one parent's comment, 'There is a very caring atmosphere at Tidbury Green School.' The good relationships with teachers and effective pastoral care ensure that the pupils understand the importance of staying safe and they feel secure and valued. The safeguarding of pupils meets government requirements. The school works effectively with a range of support agencies to promote pupils' well-being.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall with good features. Pupils enjoy school, reflected in their above average levels of attendance and good behaviour. They are enthusiastic participants in class discussions and show respect to both adults and other pupils.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of skills that are in line with the expectations for their age. Good induction procedures ensure they quickly settle into the school's routines. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that almost all are attaining the expected levels by the start of Year 1 and a significant number are exceeding them. Children clearly enjoy school, behave well and develop self-confidence. Stimulating topics capture their interest and good support from adults helps them develop independent learning. The creative and lively environment allows opportunities for role play and encourages good speaking and listening skills. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is effective and the teaching is generally good, particularly in the Reception class. Children make good progress because of the clear focus on matching work to their level. The staff work well together to ensure that there is a good, wide

range of activities including focused number and phonics work that promote learning well. This provides the pupils with a good basis for their future learning. The school recognises limitations in the outdoor area, which has been identified as an area for development in the near future.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Improve the skills of practical investigation in mathematics.
- Raise the standards of writing of more able pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that teachers' marking provides pupils with clear advice on how to improve and sets them targets for the future.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 has been impeded by a high rate of staff turnover so that standards by the end of Year 6 are only broadly average. Standards have improved in English since the last inspection report and were above average in the 2007 Year 6 national tests. In contrast, standards in mathematics dipped and the percentage attaining the national average in Year 6 was below the national average. This was because skills in practical investigation were insufficiently developed. The quality of writing by more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not as good as it should be and no pupils attained the higher level in the 2008 Year 2 assessments. However, now that staffing is more stable, improvements to achievement are apparent and standards are rising. Pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties attain appropriate levels. Achievement is satisfactory. The school is setting suitably challenging targets related to pupils' prior attainment, most of which have been met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Good attendance reflects the fact that pupils enjoy school. Efforts to improve behaviour and reduce incidences of bullying by asking pupils to sign up to the school's code of behaviour have largely been successful and pupils say that behaviour has improved. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and have regular exercise in physical education lessons and various other physical activities. This knowledge is not always translated into eating healthy snacks at school, however. The school council gives pupils some responsibility in making decisions that affect themselves, for instance improvements to playground equipment. They also make a satisfactory contribution to the wider community through a range of charitable initiatives such as Operation Christmas Child. Pupils' satisfactory progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepares them suitably for the next stage of their schooling. Projects such as the Enterprise Challenge not only gives them an insight into business but also helps develop satisfactorily their capacity to work with others and the skills which contribute to their economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the past, there was some inconsistency, explained by the high turnover of staff and temporary arrangements to cover classes. This has improved now, due to the greater stability in staffing. All teachers have good relationships with pupils that promote a positive learning atmosphere. Teaching assistants are deployed well throughout the school to support pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge that helps them to build on pupils' good attitudes to engage them purposefully in their learning. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of more able pupils are too low, particularly in writing in Years 1 and 2. The teaching of the skills of investigation has been less effective, resulting in lower standards in mathematics than English. Teachers plan lessons well to meet the varying needs of pupils. They mark work very thoroughly and regularly, giving pupils a clear indication of their level of progress. However, they too rarely give advice to pupils on how they can improve or share targets for learning with them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is sufficient emphasis on developing basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of most pupils, although it does not always provide sufficiently challenging opportunities for more able pupils, particularly in writing in Years 1 and 2. The school is aware of the need to increase the amount of practical investigation in mathematics across the school. The inclusion of creativity in project work has improved pupils' attitude to work and each other, reflected in an improvement in behaviour. Pupils enjoy the many and varied clubs and enrichment activities that the school provides. They particularly enjoyed the part that they played in the 'Ten Tribes' concert at Symphony Hall in Birmingham, and the opportunity to work with an artist in residence in connection with this project. Visits to a forest provide pupils with a valuable opportunity to carry out first hand investigations out of doors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory overall. The pastoral care and support of pupils is good but the academic guidance is only satisfactory. The school has worked hard and successfully to create a caring atmosphere where pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and each other. Regular contact is maintained between home and school. There are good links with the wrap-around-care provision which helps to ensure that Nursery children are cared for well. Pupils are becoming more aware of how they are progressing, although teachers' marking of their work does not often give them advice on how they can improve. Detailed records of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that they are both identified promptly and have the right support and care. There are good links with outside agencies, and parents are involved well in discussing their children's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has quickly grasped the strengths and weaknesses of the school and articulated a very clear vision for improvement. She has fostered a marked sense of teamwork and purpose. The governors have responded to criticisms in the last report and are now a decisive, effective body. During the recent unsettled period, they have become increasingly aware of their need to act as a critical friend. They have thorough monitoring processes which enable them to both support and challenge the senior leadership as necessary. The school development plan is more detailed in response to criticisms in the last report. However, some of the criteria used to judge the success of initiatives is insufficiently precise. The turnover of staff has affected middle management overall so their influence has not been significant. Strategies introduced to address the recent dip in mathematics results are beginning to show an impact. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis with a calm atmosphere. Satisfactory standards and provision have been sustained, which confirms the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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.

Annex A

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 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	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

4 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tidbury Green School, Solihull, B90 1QW

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, hearing your views and watching you learn.

We found that Tidbury Green is a caring school and that it provides you with a satisfactory education. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and there are good ideas for future improvement. Teaching is satisfactory so that you are making appropriate progress. You told us you enjoy school and we can understand the reasons why. We were impressed with your good attendance and how well you behave.

- We have suggested three areas that the school needs to improve.
- We have asked the teachers to help you develop your skills in investigation so that you are better at mathematics.
- We have asked the teachers when they mark your work to give you more advice on how you can make it even better and set you clear targets for your work. We would also like you to act on the guidance you receive!
- We have asked the school to help those of you who are good at writing in Years 1 and 2 to achieve the standards of which we think you are capable. We would ask you to try your best, too.

We wish you well in the future.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Alwyne Jolly Lead inspector