

Tansley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112592
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310936
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Glynn Storer

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Musgrave
Headteacher	Miss Tracey Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2003
School address	Gold Hill Tansley Matlock Derbyshire DE4 5FG
Telephone number	01629 582448
Fax number	01629 582448

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Inspection number	310936

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. He also looked closely at the impact of the school's drive to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour and how the school's efforts to reorganise the curriculum and re-build the teaching and management teams affects pupils' learning and achievement. The school's capacity to improve further was also evaluated. Evidence was gathered from classroom visits and from discussions with staff, pupils and governors. The inspector examined pupils' work and school documents, especially assessment and safeguarding information. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This small rural school serves families from the village of Tansley and the surrounding area within the Peak District of Derbyshire. All pupils are White British and most benefit from socially advantaged backgrounds. In recent years, children's attainments on entry to school have been similar to those normally expected of four-year-olds. However, this varies considerably from year to year because of the small numbers in each intake. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that in schools nationally. In recent years, the school has experienced an exceptionally high turnover of staff, including headteachers.

The school has been awarded the Green Flag ECO Schools Award and currently holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Active Mark. It is working towards accreditation as a Health Promoting School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Tansley Primary School is a satisfactory, but improving, school. In recent years, the very high turnover of staff at all levels, including senior leadership, led to disruptions to pupils' learning and to dips in both standards and quality of provision. However, the recently appointed headteacher has successfully improved the quality of education that the school provides, and halted a decline in standards. Pupils' progress is getting better. The school has risen in parents' estimation, because communication between home and school has improved and most appreciate the improvements that are being made. This comment sums up the feelings of many. 'Governors have made excellent choices in the appointment of new staff, who work brilliantly with existing staff - a great team all round.'

Children get a sound start in the Foundation Stage and the school builds on this satisfactorily so that pupils make sound progress as they move up through the school. Current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average and represent satisfactory achievement. However, in the early years, writing skills develop more slowly than other basic skills and the school rightly identifies this as an area for improvement. Nevertheless, pupils' progress is improving. This is evident in the current work of pupils in Years 2 to 6. Inspection findings indicate standards in writing and mathematics have improved considerably during this school year, so that growing numbers of pupils are on course to reach or exceed the expected standard for their age. The school's tracking of pupils' progress indicates that this gradual improvement is set to continue, particularly in reading and writing, where improvements to the curriculum, teaching resources and teaching methods are taking effect.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, evidence from the inspection indicates that the incidence of good teaching is rising. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response in lessons. During the last year, staff have worked hard and successfully to instil positive attitudes to learning in pupils and this is now beginning to improve the quality of their work. Teachers' planning has improved with the result that most lessons make good provision for pupils with differing ages and/or abilities. When teaching is less successful, this matching of tasks to pupils' ages and abilities is not so sharp and so some pupils do not always make the progress that they should. There is good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, which is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils who find learning difficult or who have specific disabilities take a full part in lessons and make similar progress to their classmates. The basic curriculum is satisfactory, although current planning in the Foundation Stage does not give enough emphasis to outdoor learning. Therefore, opportunities are missed to promote learning in ways that would interest children. Recent improvements in the teaching of reading and writing have already raised standards. Computers and other information and communication technology facilities aid pupils' learning in most subjects. The school has successfully extended the curriculum by providing French lessons in Years 2 to 6. There is also a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that successfully bring learning to life, increase pupils' enjoyment of school and promote fit, healthy lifestyles.

Staff provide good levels of pastoral care and support for all pupils. Good relationships and open channels of communication between home and school enable staff to respond sensitively to pupils' personal development and welfare needs. This quality of care results in good levels of personal development and well-being for pupils. Attendance rates are above average. Pupils know how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles and their good behaviour and relationships, along with the care they show for others, help the school to function as a caring community. Their

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils also make a good contribution to the wider community. One parent commented; 'I feel that the staff should all be congratulated on making the school the hub of the village.' Measures for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements and the procedures and training of staff in matters of child protection are up to date. Pupils receive satisfactory guidance about their work. They value their recently introduced personal targets and older pupils are beginning to use them, for example to improve their writing. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' marking that mean that pupils do not always receive clear messages about how to improve their work or progress to the next level.

The headteacher has done a good job in promoting school improvement. The pace of change has increased because she has systematically rebuilt the staff team and her vision and tenacity in the face of difficulties have pulled the team together and raised staff morale. She has also set in place rigorous procedures for checking on standards and for improving the quality and consistency of teaching. School self-evaluation is very accurate and forms a good basis for forward planning. These foundations have quickly enabled the headteacher to make a difference, for example in improving the learning environment, re-establishing positive attitudes and good classroom behaviour and by providing new resources to support the school's drive to raise standards. However, despite the headteacher's impressive record of school improvement, leadership and management is satisfactory overall. This is because lack of experience and training limit staff in their ability to fulfil their leadership roles and support the headteacher effectively. Governance is strong. Governors have helped to maintain stability and encourage staff during a time of rapid change. Governors collect a wealth of first-hand information and are rigorous in monitoring the school's progress towards identified priorities and in holding the school to account for what it achieves. Their contribution, along with thorough management systems, the headteacher's drive and the commitment of staff, gives the school a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children get a satisfactory start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They receive an appropriate range of activities covering all areas of learning, with times for them to follow their own enquiries and to learn through play. However, these activities are not always planned and managed in a way that leads children into patterns of behaviour that help their learning or promote skills such as early writing. This delays progress when they transfer to Year 1. Children benefit from some organised outdoor activities but the Foundation Stage curriculum does not maximise opportunities to develop children's skills in all areas of learning through outdoor activities. Nevertheless, by the time children transfer to Year 1, most have made satisfactory progress and attain or are close to attaining most of the expectations expressed in the Early Learning Goals.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give more emphasis to outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Give children in Foundation Stage and Year 1 more activities that motivate them to write and more opportunities to reinforce early writing skills in all areas of the curriculum.
- Ensure that staff use performance data effectively to match tasks closely to pupils' ages and abilities and to give them clear guidance on how to improve.
- Improve leadership skills for teachers so that they can support the headteacher effectively in school improvement initiatives.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------

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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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	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.

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	2
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

12 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tansley Primary School, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5FG

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed talking to you when I visited your lessons and particularly liked hearing children in Sycamore Class give their ideas about the new local supermarket.

This is what I found out about your school:

- Children in Reception get off to a sound start in school.
- Your behaviour and the way that you work during lessons is getting better and as a result, you are making better progress, particularly in writing.
- Your teachers plan lots of exciting things for you to do. One of you told me 'this makes lessons fun'.
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you and keep you safe.
- Miss Holmes, the staff, governors and pupils are working hard to make your school even better.

In order to help, I have suggested four things that the school should do:

- Give children in Reception more chances to learn out of doors.
- Give the younger children every possible opportunity to learn and practice writing.
- Make sure that teachers use everything they know about you to plan work that is just right to help you make progress and to give you good advice about how to improve your work.
- Find ways to enable all staff to help Miss Holmes organise, check and improve parts of the school's work.

Thanks again and best wishes to everyone at Tansley Primary School.

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector