

# Tiptree Heath Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114733
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311683
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Deane-Hall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mike Puttick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Delia Cooke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	103 Maldon Road Tiptree Colchester Essex CO5 0PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01621 815445
<b>Fax number</b>	01621 819893

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Tiptree Heath School is an average-size primary school. It serves an area of mainly owner-occupied properties, with around 40% of the pupils coming from outside the traditional catchment area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few from minority ethnic groups. A very small proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is slightly below average and none has a statement. When children start school in Reception their skills and knowledge are broadly as expected for children of their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The vast majority of parents have a generally positive view of the school's work. One parent commented that 'older children know the younger ones, which helps create a friendly atmosphere.' Pupils make steady progress to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Children make more rapid progress in the Foundation Stage. Results from national assessments show a steady rise in standards in Year 2 to match the national average.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some good and outstanding teaching which builds upon pupils' prior learning and takes into account what they need to do to improve. Systems for checking how well pupils are learning have recently been improved to provide a more detailed picture of their progress. They have not been in place long enough throughout the school to raise standards in Year 6. There are some good examples of teachers helping pupils to improve their work by providing clear guidance in their marking and setting suitably challenging targets for learning. However, this practice is not consistent. Teaching is consistently better for the oldest pupils and youngest children, and in Year 4. Consequently, it is in these parts of the school that pupils often make more rapid progress. This is because lessons move at a brisk pace; pupils are provided with challenging activities which match their needs and they are clear about what they are expected to learn. This is not always the case elsewhere.

Ongoing improvements to the curriculum ensure a satisfactory range of activities to help pupils to learn. The school is beginning to provide a greater focus on developing basic skills across subjects. These include good opportunities for creative activity, for example, in art, as well as lessons in French. The school has a positive atmosphere where good behaviour, above-average attendance and delightful relationships prevail. Good personal development reflects the strong emphasis placed by the school on aspects of its care for pupils. Procedures to support pupils' personal care are good but the quality of academic guidance and support is variable. Strategies to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are thorough and help to ensure that many make good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school and her evaluation of its provision is perceptive. Her single-minded determination has brought about positive change in the relatively short time she has been in post. She is supported well by staff who are developing their own leadership roles effectively, but this process is still at early stage. The senior leadership team is beginning to have a positive impact on the life of the school. However, the role of the deputy headteacher within the team no longer reflects the changing needs of the school. The governing body has an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further. The school recognises that achievement needs to improve to help raise standards and is working hard and successfully to remedy this. Given the commitment of staff and governors, the school is satisfactorily placed to continue improving.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

The new leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are extremely effective. The high quality provision helps children settle quickly and have a flying start to their school life. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is often outstanding, resulting in rapid progress by children.

Adults in the Reception Class work very well together and encourage children to use all of their senses to enrich their learning. As a result, they enjoy their activities and make rapid progress. The curriculum covers all of the required areas of learning extremely well and provides a very good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated learning. A strong emphasis is placed upon developing language, communication, personal and social skills, as well as problem solving. In previous years most children reached the level expected by the time they entered Year 1. However, currently, children are making significantly better progress.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching overall, especially the pace and challenge set in lessons, so that it matches the best practice in school.
- Ensure that all marking helps pupils to know how to improve their work.
- Develop the role of the deputy headteacher to reflect a realistic professional role in line with the changing needs of the school.
- Improve achievement further by building on the developing systems for tracking how well pupils are doing and providing them with appropriate support and challenge.

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 their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory. The results in 2007 for Year 6 were an improvement on the results for 2006. The Year 2 assessments also show continuing improvement, year on year, in standards. This results from an increased focus on tracking pupils' progress and ensuring that most teaching matches their learning needs. The school is aware that more opportunities to develop pupils' writing are needed in order to raise standards further. There are clear signs across the school that achievement is starting to improve. Pupils who find learning difficult achieve well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attitudes and behaviour, in lessons and around the school, are good. Some occasionally, lose concentration when the pace of learning slows a little. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic in their work, particularly in those lessons where they learn through practical activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's positive ethos helps to ensure that pupils are clear about right and wrong. They are increasingly aware of the importance of healthy eating and how to keep themselves safe. Links with other schools, such as the association with a school in Brixton help to support pupils' understanding of the wider community. The school council is beginning to have an increased role in the life of the school. Pupils' steady progress in gaining the basic skills needed for the next stage of their education, and acquisition of a good range of personal skills, should stand them in good stead in the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Good teaching in Years 4 and 6 accelerates pupils' progress. Lessons proceed in a calm and orderly manner because teachers expect pupils to respond well and they manage their behaviour effectively. Good use of the interactive whiteboards across the school helps pupils to concentrate on their work. However, there are missed opportunities to involve pupils in their use in lessons to support their learning. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and staff use praise well to motivate pupils to do their best. Where teaching is particularly effective, lessons move along at a brisk pace and staff plan challenging, practical activities. They give clear guidance to pupils about how to reach the targets that have been set for them. Although there are a few good examples of marking that provide pupils with clear guidance as to how to improve their work, this is not consistent across the school. As a result, too many pupils are unclear about what they have to do to improve their work or how to know when they have succeeded.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum has some good features. The learning environment in lessons and around the school is attractive. Pupils' experience is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors, such as leaders of the Muslim and Jewish communities. Several well attended, out-of-school activities and clubs provide pupils with opportunities to widen their learning. Their cultural development is well supported by links with other schools. Changes to the structure of the curriculum ensure that pupils are more actively involved in learning. These changes are in their early stages and the impact has not yet had time to feed through to raising standards in Year 6.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, support and guidance. This is particularly so for pupils' personal development. Robust systems are in place to ensure that they are safe and well looked after. The school works closely with external agencies in supporting those with learning difficulties or disabilities. The quality of academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. The school's systems for checking their progress in learning are comprehensive. While this information is used to set clear targets for improvement, pupils are not always clear about the steps they need to take to reach those targets. Support for pupils who find learning difficult is good.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has been effective in ensuring that the necessary systems and procedures are in place to support pupils' learning. Governance is good. Governors provide an increasingly knowledgeable level of support and challenge. They carry out their strategic role well and are more involved in checking the impact of new developments. For example, the school has set about putting in place systems to improve its communication with parents and carers, and governors are suitably involved in this work. The school's development plan, while identifying the necessary areas for improvement, lacks a clear focus on how improvements will help pupils'

learning. The school seeks the views of parents and pupils systematically, though a small number of parents feel that senior leadership does not listen to them. The school is aware of this situation and has already put in place new avenues, such as the 'Parents' Forum'.





## 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

6 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tiptree Heath Primary School, Tiptree, Colchester CO5 0PG

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school and for helping us during the inspection. We enjoyed watching your lessons and talking with so many of you. Here are some of the things your school does well.

- Staff take good care of you and they do their best to make sure you feel safe and can enjoy your lessons and other activities.
- All the staff and governors know what your school does well and what needs to improve.
- You said that your teachers and teaching assistants have helped you to know how to be healthy and take care of yourselves.
- You behave well and are polite.
- Staff help those of you who find learning difficult to do well.
- Younger children in the Reception class have lots of interesting lesson to help them learn.

To make your learning even better we have asked the staff and the governors to consider doing the following.

- To help you in your work by letting you know what you have to do to improve and achieve your targets.
- To make sure that you have even more good lessons with the sort of work which will help you learn more quickly.
- To make sure that the role of the deputy headteacher is clearer so that the school's senior leadership team works together really well to make your school even better.
- To carry on making sure that the new systems to check how well you are doing are put in place across the whole school to help you in your learning.

You can do your bit to help by making sure that you carry on working hard and thinking about what sort of things help you to learn in lessons, and telling your teachers about these.

Christopher Deane-Hall Lead inspector