

Tenbury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116850
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312422
Inspection dates	30–31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Palethorpe
Headteacher	Paul Jackson-Read
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2004
School address	Bromyard Road Tenbury Wells WR15 8BS
Telephone number	01584 810234
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized primary school draws its pupils from Tenbury Wells and the surrounding rural area. The great majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Only a very small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. Of these, five have statements of special educational need, a slightly higher proportion than in most schools. For the five years prior to the appointment of the current headteacher in February 2007, the school experienced considerable instability in its senior leadership.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tenbury Church of England Primary School is a good school. Stable, vigorous leadership, strongly focused on raising achievement, has given the school a new sense of purpose. Parents are pleased that the school has a clear direction once more. As one said, 'I count my blessings daily. Tenbury is a wonderful place for my children to start their education.'

Children join the Foundation Stage with a wide range of skills, but overall they are at a level which is below that expected for their age. They get off to a good start because of effective teaching. Recent changes have significantly enhanced the provision, so that children's learning is improving all the time. Whereas in previous years many children entered Year 1 with skills that were at a lower level than expected, Reception children are now making more rapid progress and standards are rising. The Forest School initiative, which promotes a range of skills, is making a significant contribution to children's better learning. Although pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of rigorous teaching, this has, in the past, been from relatively low starting points and so they have done well to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Consistently good teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to progress quickly, so that standards by the end of Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. Overall achievement is good, but the school recognises the need to raise standards further by the end of Year 2.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They greatly enjoy their time in school and attend well. Their attitudes are positive and behaviour is good. They develop self-confidence through good relationships with staff and other pupils and through the many activities, visits and residential opportunities. Numerous sporting opportunities and a thorough awareness of their diet help pupils to have a good understanding of how to live healthily. Their awareness of keeping safe is also developing well.

New tracking systems are effective in enabling staff to pitch work at the correct level of challenge. A wide variety of opportunities exists for pupils to develop good basic skills in literacy and numeracy. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their skills and to extend their learning. This means that even more could be done to help pupils' preparation for their future lives. The curriculum offers rich cultural, musical and sporting opportunities. Extra-curricular and enrichment provision is outstanding.

The school provides good pastoral care and support, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents are very appreciative of the attention their children receive. For example one said, 'My child has profound needs... the help, understanding, support and care he receives is amazing.' Academic guidance is not yet as strong because the good systems for tracking pupils' progress are comparatively recent. Not all staff are equally confident in implementing the system of individual targets. In addition, marking of pupils' work does not always provide a clear indication of what they need to do to improve in order to reach their targets.

The school has good links with its partner secondary school and the local community. Good leadership and management from the headteacher and staff, and good governance and incisive and accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses provide clear direction for future developments. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many children enter Nursery with skills that are at a lower level than expected, particularly in personal development and in language. Good teaching, underpinned by rigorous assessment and planning, ensures that children make good progress in these areas of learning. Progress has been less marked in other curriculum areas, but this imbalance is being addressed successfully through the Forest School initiative, which is having a significant effect on children's physical development and their knowledge of the world. Although, until recently, not all children entered Year 1 having made sufficient progress towards the expected goals, Reception children too are now making good progress in all areas of learning as a result of good teaching. They are already further advanced and most are working within the expected levels, with a small number working at the higher levels. The environment is stimulating and relationships are positive. Children have the confidence to initiate activities, show good independence and are able to sustain concentration over a significant period of time.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build upon the improved provision in Foundation Stage to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to develop their skills and to support their learning across the curriculum.
- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently indicates how pupils can improve their work in order to reach their targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From below-average starting points when children join the Nursery, pupils achieve well so that their standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Until recently, good progress was not consistent across the school and meant that a considerable amount of 'catch-up' was needed for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Improved provision in the Foundation Stage, however, is now leading to better achievement and broadly average standards by the time children enter Year 1, on which teachers in Years 1 and 2 can build. In spite of some earlier weaknesses in pupils' learning in the past, effective teaching in Years 1 and 2 has always enabled them to make the good progress necessary to attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. There is now the opportunity to raise standards even further. Targets for pupils in Year 6 were exceeded in 2007 and this reflects particularly good achievement. However, the school is aware of the need to make better use of ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified accurately and they receive effective support. Pupils with limited knowledge of English receive very little specialist support but most have acquired good skills in spoken English. They make steady, but slower, progress in their written work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The 'playleader' initiative effectively promotes good relationships between pupils of different ages and these ensure that pupils feel secure. Pupils trust their teachers and feel that, when confrontations occur, staff manage their safety well. Pupils are confident, friendly and cooperate

well. Behaviour is good and on occasions exemplary. There have been no recent exclusions. Their enjoyment of school is evident in above-average attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good; social development is a particular strength. They show good awareness of a range of faiths and traditions. They make an active contribution to the school community through the school council and other posts of responsibility. There are good links to the wider community, particularly through the church. Pupils develop skills that contribute to their future economic well-being through fund raising and the Eco-Council. However, because insufficient opportunities are taken to develop pupils' skills in ICT, more could be done to prepare them for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Lessons skilfully promote children's basic language and social skills. Good, challenging teaching in the later years also leads to good learning and enjoyment and underpins increasingly good achievement. Assessment is used effectively to help teachers plan lessons well, although marking does not always indicate what pupils need to do to improve. Classes are managed effectively and pupils' attention is engaged through brisk, imaginative teaching. The best lessons feature a good mix of learning activities where pupils work both cooperatively and independently and learn to think for themselves. They make most progress when there is a good level of challenge, where they know what they are expected to learn and where work is very closely matched to their needs. Teaching assistants have an important role in supporting pupils who need additional help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The restructured curriculum meets current needs well. Lower school themes now encompass both the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 to ensure continuity and cohesion of approach. Themes are selected to engage the interest of underperforming pupils. Foundation Stage provision has been enhanced considerably by the introduction of the Forest School initiative. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities focuses sharply on what they need to learn to improve. Support for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning. At present, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects or to apply their writing skills sufficiently in science. The teaching of handwriting is not given sufficient priority. Provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities is outstanding, offering an extensive range of opportunities in music and sport. There are annual residential visits from Year 2 which significantly enhance pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are implemented securely. Adults promote pupils' health, safety and welfare well. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult to support them. The school has good links with external agencies. There are effective systems for supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They receive good support from the well-trained teaching assistants and their progress is monitored carefully.

Academic guidance is only satisfactory because, although detailed tracking systems underpin the monitoring of individual progress, they are very recent. In addition, whilst pupils have individual improvement targets in literacy, numeracy and personal development and are mostly aware of them, they are not implemented as rigorously in some classes as others and not all marking is effectively linked to these targets. Consequently, pupils do not always know how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has brought stability, vision and cohesion to the school. The pace of change has been brisk, with a clear impact on pupils' achievement. The school's thorough self-evaluation of strengths, weaknesses and performance is accurate. Leaders at all levels have been empowered and share a common purpose and this is reflected in increasingly high expectations of what pupils and staff can do. Much work has been undertaken to ensure the consistent quality of teaching in order to raise standards further. Assessment systems have been implemented effectively, although there is more to do to ensure that information on pupils' progress is readily accessible to staff. Resources are well deployed, although pupils under-use ICT resources. The highly effective governing body is very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and holds the school to account well.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2
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	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?	2
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?	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	2
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

2 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Tenbury C of E Primary School, Worcestershire WR15 8BS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were very open and keen to relate to us and we very much enjoyed talking to you. Tenbury C of E Primary is a good school and we could see that you are very proud of it and that you really appreciate what the staff do for you. We were impressed by the way you care for each other and try to include everyone.

These are the main things that we found.

- You behave very well in lessons and around the school and you work hard.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start.
- All of the teaching is at least satisfactory and much of it is good. While you make good progress in lessons and standards are particularly good by Year 6, they need to be higher in Year 2.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for well. You understand how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- The curriculum is good. You enjoy the activities, but especially the impressive range of sport, out-of-school activities and residential visits.
- The leaders of the school make sure it runs very smoothly and are very clear about what to do to improve it still further.

We are asking the school to make these changes so that it is even more effective.

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.
- Make sure that you have good opportunities to use your ICT skills in other subjects.
- Make sure that teachers' marking is linked closely to your targets so that you always know how you can improve your work.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

With best wishes

- George Logan
- Lead inspector