

Tillington Manor Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	124196
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	314839
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	303
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Thomas
Headteacher	Mike Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Young Avenue Stafford ST16 1PW
Telephone number	01785 356880
Fax number	01785 356880

Age group	3–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils come to this large primary school from the local community. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are three classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage – a Nursery class and two Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, the school was being led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Both took up post in September 2008.

An external provider offers childcare on the school site. This provision has been inspected separately.

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 that is moving forward quickly under the clear direction of the acting headteacher and other senior staff. They have made a good start to tackling areas of weakness and are dealing rigorously with the remaining pockets of underachievement.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, quickly learning new skills. The school is failing to meet statutory requirements in terms of staffing for the Nursery class, but this is not having a significant impact on children's learning. Pupils' progress is improving in the rest of the school. Standards at the end of Year 6 are rising and are broadly average overall. In English, standards in writing are lower than in reading. Older pupils make too many mistakes in their spelling and punctuation. This is because teachers do not always use marking well enough to help pupils improve. Consequently, some mistakes are not corrected, especially when pupils are writing in their topic books.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are hard working and they prepare thoroughly. However, in some lessons, teachers do not pitch work at the right level for all pupils, particularly the more able, and this slows their progress. Teachers plan interesting activities that make learning fun. Classrooms are lively, exciting places with very attractive displays of work that celebrate the school's recent successes. For example, the time-line that cascades down the walls of a long corridor is a super example of the pupils' work, and the whole school worked together to produce it.

Pupils are well cared for and this ensures that their personal development is good. One pupil rightly commented, 'We know the teachers will help us when we have a worry because they are so kind.' Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is good and they work hard in lessons. They develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and are happy to take responsibility outside lessons. Pupils are happy at school and especially like the way that visits and visitors help to bring subjects alive. Activities such as these enrich the otherwise satisfactory curriculum.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is improving because members of staff share the acting headteacher's commitment to ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential. Leaders are keen and enthusiastic and work well as a team. In the last six months, there have been many helpful initiatives. These have already had a positive effect on pupils' progress. For example, the school has begun successfully to tackle some underachievement in boys' writing in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that lessons include a greater range of 'boy-friendly' activities.

Senior managers have gathered much information about progress from year to year and are beginning to set targets that are more challenging for pupils to achieve. This is helping to give senior managers a clearer picture of where pupils have not been doing well enough so that they can be given additional support. Subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic. However, they do not always have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning for themselves so that they can find out what needs improving. Nevertheless, the generally upward trend in standards and the positive effect of the many recent developments demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Members of staff have forged a strong partnership with parents, other local schools and outside agencies. Parents are very pleased with the school, and they see many recent improvements. They typically say things like, 'My child loves school,' and 'The new headteacher has had a good impact.' Comments such as these capture the main strengths of this improving school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well because teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. When children start school in the Nursery, only a minority of children are working at the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress from these starting points and reach broadly average standards by the start of Year 1. Children make good progress in personal and social development because of the high expectations of all adults and the good quality of care. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere throughout the day, and the good curriculum includes effective use of the well-resourced outdoor area to support learning. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, adults work together closely and they provide good levels of challenge for the children.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Governors acknowledge that they have been slow in ensuring that they meet statutory requirements by employing a teacher for the Nursery class, but there are now suitable plans in place to address this issue. In other respects, leaders have a clear understanding of areas for development, including the need to strengthen further systems for monitoring children's learning so that progress can be tracked rigorously from term to term.

What the school should do to improve further

- Meet statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage by employing a qualified teacher for the Nursery class.
- Ensure that teachers consistently pitch work at the right level for all pupils, especially the most able.
- Give pupils more guidance about how to improve their written work, especially when writing in subjects other than English.
- Give subject leaders opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects so that any inconsistencies in provision can be resolved quickly. 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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their progress is improving across the school. This is beginning to be reflected in higher test results at the end of Year 6, which have increased to broadly average levels and are set to rise further as improved standards lower down the school filter through. In writing, progress is still uneven. Although there is a more positive picture lower down the school with work in the current Year 2 reflecting good recent improvement, older pupils write less confidently and do not always apply basic spelling and punctuation skills correctly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as others in most lessons. Those who are able to work in small groups for longer periods in 'The Rainbow Room' benefit greatly from the intensive support that they are given at these times.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the trust shown in them by members of staff. They are polite and friendly and there is a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils form good relationships with each other and clearly enjoy school. Attendance rates have improved to broadly average levels due to the good links that have been established with education welfare services.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils quickly learn good values and they support each other well. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are keen to take responsibility. The school council gives pupils a good voice and enables them to contribute successfully to the community. For example, they have recently helped to improve the playground. Pupils are considerate of the needs of others and they take a good part in local events, although their understanding of cultures other than their own is less well developed.

Pupils adopt healthy and safe lifestyles well. They talk confidently about the importance of eating a balanced diet, and they participate keenly in physical activities. Activities such as 'Bikewise' ensure that pupils are very clear about how to stay safe when coming to school and they are knowledgeable about the dangers they may encounter in their everyday lives. Pupils develop sound basic skills that prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and gain an early insight into the world of enterprise through links with businesses and by organising fund-raising activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are good features to teaching across the school. All teachers manage behaviour well and they plan interesting activities that hold the pupils' attention. Teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to introduce new skills and to demonstrate to the pupils what they are expected to learn. Good relationships between members of staff and the pupils contribute effectively to the calm atmosphere in lessons. Teachers are beginning to make sharper use of information about how well pupils are doing to plan the next stage of learning but this is not yet consistent across the school. This means that there are occasions when teachers do not pitch work at the right level for all pupils, especially to ensure that there is enough challenge for the more able. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently but they do not always give clear enough guidance on how to improve, especially in written work across the curriculum. Teaching assistants provide valuable support in many lessons, particularly when working with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school offers a broad curriculum that helps pupils to make steady progress in developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are beginning to establish closer links between different subjects in order to make learning more purposeful, although this is not yet firmly established across the whole school. For example, whilst pupils get many opportunities to write in history lessons, there is a limited amount of recorded work in science. Similarly, not all pupils get enough opportunities to practise and develop their computing skills in lessons. A good range of extra-curricular activities and visits, including residential stays for older pupils, enrich

the curriculum. These activities help to bring subjects alive and are greatly enjoyed by pupils and much appreciated by parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good pastoral care supports pupils' personal development successfully and contributes greatly to their enjoyment of school. Members of staff know the pupils well and the school provides a safe and caring environment. Pupils rightly say that there is always an adult available for pupils to talk to if they are finding school or home life difficult so that problems can be resolved quickly. Safeguarding arrangements meet the government's requirements. Academic support is satisfactory. The use of targets to help pupils understand how to improve is developing well, but it is not yet consistent across classes or subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and given suitable support towards meeting their individual goals.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The decisive leadership of the acting headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher is helping the school to move forward. Recent helpful initiatives have included the increased use of test information to measure pupils' progress and to find out where additional support is needed. There has also been a successful focus on improving boys' writing in Years 1 and 2.

Senior leaders have a clear picture of what remains to be done because there are satisfactory systems for evaluating school effectiveness. Subject leaders are very pleased that they are getting more opportunities than in the past to contribute to monitoring of the school's work. They have already carried out some useful sampling of pupils' work but have not yet had an opportunity to carry out their own checks on the quality of teaching. This makes it difficult for them to identify what needs to be done to improve progress further in their subjects.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It works closely with the local community and the school's leaders respond well to its diverse needs. However, they are aware that they are not yet fully developing the pupils' understanding of the world beyond Tillington Manor and its local environment. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and play a good part in financial planning. They have been especially successful at finding additional funding from local businesses to support projects such as 'The Rainbow Room'. Although they have failed to meet statutory requirements by employing a qualified teacher for the Nursery class, this has had a limited impact on the quality of provision.

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
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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 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?	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/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?	3

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?	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	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**

11 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Tillington Manor Primary School, Stafford, ST16 1PW

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly. We found that at the moment your school is providing a satisfactory education, although it is improving quickly.

Some of the things we liked most about your school

- You make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and quickly learn many new things.
- You behave well, are very happy at school and take responsibility very sensibly. We were particularly impressed with the way that the school council is working to improve things.
- Adults are very kind and caring and they look after you well.
- The school successfully teaches you about the importance of staying safe and healthy.
- The headteacher, other members of staff and governors are moving the school forward and are taking the right steps to help you learn even more quickly.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Ensure that they appoint a teacher for the Nursery class, as this is required by the law.
- Help older pupils to do better in writing, making better use of marking to help you understand the next step in improving your work.
- Make sure that teachers always provide work in lessons that challenges you to do well, especially those of you who learn quickly.
- Give teachers who are in charge of subjects more time to check how well you are being taught, so that they can make it even better.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard in lessons. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Mike Capper

Lead inspector