

# Trimley St Mary Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124613
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	314984
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jill Bavin

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.

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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 (total)	370
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Monk
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christine Ashford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	High Road Trimley St Mary Felixstowe Suffolk IP11 0ST
<b>Telephone number</b>	01394284130
<b>Fax number</b>	01394270570

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school with separate pre-school provision in the school grounds but which is not the responsibility of the school governors. There are very few minority ethnic children in the school and none with English as an additional language. There are fewer children with additional learning needs than in most schools. Children's abilities vary from year to year and within year groups, but most commonly children join the Reception class with the levels of skill expected for their age. There are two classes of similar size in each year group. Most teachers have moved to different year groups this term and some children have moved into different classes.

The school attained full Healthy Schools status in 2007 and is currently working towards an environmental award. The current headteacher joined the school in April 2008. The inspection started on the fifth day of the new academic year.

## 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 and improving school. While the great majority of parents are supportive of the school's work a minority are concerned about recent changes to staffing and class organisation. Inspectors endorse the headteacher's judgement of the school's strengths and weaknesses, believing it to be accurate and perceptive. She has quickly taken up the reins of those developments she inherited and most importantly has rapidly prioritised and communicated clear expectations to staff. The impact of this is apparent in an emerging whole school approach to encourage all children to develop a wider range of thinking skills. This has already improved teaching and enriched learning for all children. Most significantly, it has helped the school to address an issue from the previous inspection and enhanced learning for higher attaining children.

Adequate teaching overall ensures that most children in the school make expected rates of progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in English are good and past improvements have been maintained. The school is now rightly focusing on improving standards and achievement in mathematics; a good start has already been made on ensuring that key mathematical skills, such as calculation, are taught systematically but more needs to be done. Subject leaders and governors welcome the clarity the headteacher has brought to school development. Their support means that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall because the introduction of a watertight system for prioritising and systematically evaluating the impact of change is still very recent. This means that governors and subject leaders are still developing their effectiveness in driving school improvement. Consequently, the school is just beginning to benefit more from initiatives to help children improve.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but the quality varies widely from outstanding to barely satisfactory. This is largely attributable to differences in teachers' expectations of what children can achieve. The school recognises the value of ensuring that teachers work more closely together to share good practice but needs to do more to ensure all children are served equally well by carefully planned activities in mathematics and that all have sufficient access to computers. For these reasons, the curriculum is satisfactory rather than good, despite the many examples of enrichment activities used to enhance children's learning which contribute to their good personal development. Children enjoy school, behave well and attendance is good.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children join the Reception classes with a range of knowledge and skills that generally reflect expectations for their age group. School records indicate that children now in Year 1 made good progress during their Reception Year and most attained the expected levels in all aspects of their learning. Nevertheless, assessments of what children can do and have achieved by the end of the Reception classes are not always reliable. As the school has identified, there has often been a lack of continuity in children's learning when they move into Year 1 and although this is now being addressed it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this either in the Foundation Stage or in Year 1.

The most skilful teaching encourages children to learn independently and provides stimulating activities that allow them to explore and develop their ideas, to discover things for themselves, such as the weight of large wooden blocks, and to appreciate the wonders of the natural world. Nevertheless, provision is satisfactory rather than good because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Children do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn through their own discovery. The management of the provision is satisfactory. Links with parents are good and children are well cared for.

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

- Ensure that key skills in mathematics are developed consistently and systematically throughout the school.
- Ensure that Early Years Foundation Stage assessment is consistently accurate.
- Share the best practice seen in lessons in order to raise the quality of teaching across the school to consistently good.

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 their next Section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Most children make satisfactory progress throughout the school, although there are examples of individual children and some groups of children doing better than this. Because of the extra help they receive, children who find learning difficult make good progress. In 2008 children made satisfactory gains in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and so reached standards similar to most 7 year olds. Skilful teaching in Year 6 meant that most children made good progress during the year to reach standards similar to most children nationally in English, mathematics and science in 2008. However, the weakest results were in mathematics. Children reach expected levels of skill in information and communication technology (ICT). Recent improvements in teachers' questioning skills mean that children who find learning relatively easy are now making satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children enjoy school, with many participating eagerly in the good range of different activities on offer, and they gain greater self-confidence as they progress through the years. Children's positive attitudes, and their attention and cooperation, contribute well to their progress in lessons. They show respect for adults and for each other and have a good understanding of right and wrong. While they gain knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own, some children still stereotype people from other cultures. Many of the children's actions, such as involvement in charitable work or taking on duties around the school, reflect a positive community contribution. However, children's understanding of wider issues of citizenship is not as secure. The combination of academic progress and personal development means that children are adequately prepared for future stages in their learning and the workplace. Children enjoy exercise and sports, with some notable successes, and understand the importance of keeping fit. Many walk or cycle to school and most understand the reason for eating and drinking nutritious produce. Pupils feel safe in the school and are confident that they can raise any issues with adults and that they will be promptly dealt with.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but improving. Relationships between adults and children are positive, which helps to motivate children. Teachers routinely help children to understand what they are going to learn during a lesson. Planning to meet differing needs within a class works reasonably well. The practice of modifying work for children with additional learning needs is well established but this not as secure in the provision for the most able. This is where the headteacher has already made a particularly significant contribution. Because of her leadership, teachers are more often encouraging children to think widely and creatively. As a result, teaching in Years 3 to 6 is becoming more interesting. Nevertheless, the reason why children do not make better than expected progress is because there are still inconsistencies in the challenge and pace of teaching, teachers' expectations and the extent to which marking both celebrates achievement and gives pointers for development.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum offers a balanced programme and meets statutory requirements. Good links between English and the humanities add interest for children. Mathematics and science have recently made good connections to develop children's investigative skills. However, provision in mathematics is not as strong as in English or science, although a very recent focus on developing key mathematics skills is beginning to address this. The wide range of stimulating extra-curricular activities, particularly the curriculum-related trips and opportunities to perform in the arts and in sports, enhance pupils' enjoyment of school.

Good opportunities exist for pupils to understand and get involved in the local community, but systems to ensure all pupils have equal access to these is still at an early stage. Resources and programmes for children with additional learning needs are good, contributing to their good progress. Planning for raising the attainment of higher ability pupils has begun and is showing some fruit in the improving achievement of these pupils. The school has increased children's use of ICT since the previous inspection, so it is now satisfactory, and the school has detailed plans in place to improve provision further in the near future.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Required procedures to ensure children's safety are in place. Pastoral care is strong and the school provides extra support for those children in need of extra reassurance. Good links with other schools ease the transition to high school for older children. Effective links with other professionals help staff to provide well for children with additional needs. A small number of parents shared concerns with inspectors about their children's experience of re-organised classes. In spite of this, children told inspectors that they feel secure in school and confident that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried or upset. Systems to check how well each child is doing provide a secure record of progress from Year 1 through to Year 6 and the school is currently seeking to improve them further through more effective use of ICT.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher has made a rapid and astute assessment of the school's strengths and areas for development. This has led to a good start in improving the school. Her deputy, the governors and subject leaders appreciate her focused approach to school improvement. They are embracing the culture of increased accountability that follows clarity of purpose. Governance is satisfactory because governors are well informed and fully committed to supporting the school with increasingly effective strategies for checking how well it is doing. Increased transparency in determining what the school needs to address and why, is leading to more effective teamwork. As one colleague explained, 'We're all going together now ... the dynamism is here'. There are effective systems for following each child's progress between Years 1 and 6, which inform realistic and increasingly challenging academic targets for children. The momentum for improvement is palpable.

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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 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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
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 <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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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	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 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Trimley St. Mary Primary School, Felixstowe, IP11 OST

Thank you very much for being so helpful when we visited your school recently and for sharing your work and your ideas with us. We are glad that you enjoy school and are not often away. Here are some of the good things we found in your school.

- You behave well in lessons and this helps you to learn.
- Your work is getting better in English, mathematics and science and more of you are getting Level 5s by the end of Year 6.
- You are doing more practical work in science, and solving more problems in mathematics, which is making work more interesting for you.
- You feel safe and believe that your teachers care about you.
- Children who find learning difficult are doing well.
- There are plenty of trips, special activities, sports and performances that you really enjoy.
- The new headteacher has many good ideas about how to make your school even better and your teachers and governors are enthusiastic about helping her.

We have asked the headteacher, the teachers and governors to:

- make sure that you learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide by carefully building on what you can already do
- make sure that records about what children in the Reception classes can do are always absolutely accurate
- ensure teachers share their good ideas so that all lessons are as good as the best.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to behave and keep attending so well. Thank you again for your help: we wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead inspector