

Temple Mill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132267
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	316000
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Orpin

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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Peachell
Headteacher	Jane Bright
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 0001
School address	Cliffe Road Strood Rochester ME2 3NL
Telephone number	01634 338200
Fax number	01634 727668

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Temple Mill Primary School is average in size. Pupils are mainly White British. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and an average proportion is eligible for free school meals. The school was built in 2001 and the number of pupils arriving and leaving before Year 6 is high. There have been several staff changes and periods of absence in recent years. Staffing is now stable.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Temple Mill School provides pupils, who are enthusiastic and caring, with a satisfactory standard of education. Good care, guidance and support, combined with a good programme of personal and emotional development, produce pupils who behave well and pupils enjoy school. When asked what was special about Temple Mill School, one pupil replied, 'Everything!' Attendance is above average and there is a good partnership with parents, most of whom are highly supportive of the school.

Achievement is satisfactory and improving slowly throughout the school, although standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. Achievement in science and writing is more rapid than in other subjects because teaching is better but improvement in mathematics is comparatively slow.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are stimulating so most pupils are motivated. At times, assessment information is not used to plan lessons, so some more able pupils are insufficiently challenged. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory and they set suitably challenging individual targets in English and mathematics for most pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory. Creative links between subjects make them relevant and an extensive range of trips and visitors makes learning interesting.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflected in the way they value each other, working and playing together amicably. Most have adopted healthy lifestyles and are very safety conscious. They readily contribute to the local and the wider communities and undertake responsibilities with confidence.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear vision for a school where expectations for pupils' personal development are high. The school's self-evaluation is realistic but school action so far has had limited impact on standards achieved. Monitoring systems are satisfactory but do not always lead to progress. However, there have been improvements in writing and science and in the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The new senior management team is developing its role but it has not yet significantly influenced standards. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and meet the goals expected for their age across most areas of learning. Children's attitudes to learning are good. They are enthusiastic and confident because staff are encouraging and activities are relevant and fun. Children quickly settle into classroom routines because teaching is good, lessons are organised well and they generally know what is expected from them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching by making sure all learners are suitably challenged through the use of assessments to plan lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that governors ask more challenging questions about the school's performance.
- Rigorously monitor teaching and use data to ensure that areas for development are improved by subsequent action.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's standards are lower than expected when they start at school. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that, by the time they join Year 1, they are meeting most of the goals expected for their age. Their progress is best in personal, social and emotional development. However, it is only satisfactory in communication, language and literacy, where most children do not meet the expected goals. Although standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average, achievement overall is satisfactory and improving slowly. Standards in Year 2 have risen over recent years but those in Year 6 have declined slightly because of pupils' different starting points. Significant changes in the school's population have disrupted some learning and some pupils in Years 2 to 6 did not benefit from better opportunities for their mathematical development in the Reception class. There are signs of improvement in recent years in writing and in science. Results in 2007 show that the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved so it matches that of their peers.

Progress in mathematics is slower than in other subjects but it is still satisfactory. At times, there is insufficient challenge for more-able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is a happy and harmonious community. Pupils are proud of their school and relationships are good. They are enthusiastic about learning and behave well. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They care for each other and take responsibility well. For example, they act as 'Playground Pals' for those who need extra support at break time. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They understand the importance of healthy eating and take part in physical activities enthusiastically. They take good care of their own and others' safety. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to a community, with an active school council that helps to promote pupils' views. They make a positive contribution to the wider community through fund-raising for charities such as the British Legion and the Tsunami Appeal. Their ability to work together well and their satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy mean that pupils are soundly prepared for their future. Pupils are able to organise their own equipment in lessons but they do not always learn independently and, at times, are too reliant on the teacher.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in the Reception class is good. Exciting activities are offered, such as digging soil when role-playing builders. Occasionally, some children working independently need a clearer task, such as when building a house for the Three Pigs, to help them learn as well as they do at other times. Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils are productive. Teachers manage their pupils and organise lessons well. Materials are interesting; for example, a picture of refugee children stimulated pupils' ability to write. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) to demonstrate ideas. Pupils are encouraged and adults generally work well with groups of pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

In some lessons, activities are too easy for more-able pupils. Occasionally, a few pupils are not helped enough, so they are slow to start. Sometimes, teachers use questions well to help pupils think about their work. For example, in Year 5, pupils were evaluating others' graphs. However, in other lessons, pupils are too reliant on the teacher and do not take opportunities to think for themselves.

Assessment is accurate but not always used sufficiently to plan lessons or to help pupils understand their targets in English and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers use pupils' preferences to plan work that is relevant and interesting. Pupils' skills in ICT are developed well and used to help them learn in other areas, such as designing the use of room space through graphic modelling. Pupils' social and emotional development is provided for well and there are particularly practical and exciting activities in science and writing. Links between subjects are strong. Pupils' literacy skills are used in other subjects but literacy and numeracy are not yet sufficiently well planned to ensure that standards improve.

The enrichment of the curriculum is good. There is a wide variety of trips and visitors, such as a workshop for pirates at Hampton Court, and a broad range of well-supported clubs after school offering activities such as music, sports and French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe and know that their school is a caring community. Staff listen to pupils. Child protection procedures are robust and regular health and safety checks are conducted, so the school is a very safe place. The home-school support worker offers valued additional support to individuals and their families and there is close partnership with a range of agencies. Carefully planned procedures help children settle when they start school and prepare Year 6 pupils for secondary education. Good support and guidance for their personal and emotional development are reflected by pupils' confidence and behaviour. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils know what they are expected to learn and teachers often provide useful feedback through marking of work, although pupils are not always sufficiently clear about how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's use of targets is adequately challenging, although more could be expected from some more able pupils. Targets are realistic and based on an analysis of pupils' attainment. The headteacher's clear vision and high expectations for the personal development and well-being of all learners are shared by staff and pupils, who work together well as a team. The school's success in helping pupils become confident, caring individuals owes much to the headteacher's commitment and to the positive role model she presents.

Procedures for monitoring the school's performance are satisfactory but not always sufficiently rigorous. Consequently, while some lessons are observed and teachers given clear guidance on how to improve, developments are not always monitored through follow-up visits. Similarly, data are analysed and used to focus the school's actions, but these are not always followed by

an assessment of their effects. The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Although school action so far has had limited impact on standards achieved, some positive outcomes are emerging. Carefully judged initiatives have improved some teaching so standards in writing and science have improved. These indicate that the school has a sound capacity for improvement.

The recently appointed senior management team have made a satisfactory beginning but their influence has yet to be seen in terms of higher standards and the achievement of all pupils.

The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are committed and very supportive but do not challenge the school sufficiently to improve aspects of its performance.

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

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	3
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 October 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Temple Mill Primary School, Strood, Kent ME2 3NL

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were very impressed by how friendly, polite and confident you are. Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. These are some of the other things we found out about your school:

- your results in Year 2 and in Year 6 are below those of most other schools
- you make satisfactory progress but at times, some of you could be given harder work to do
- your behaviour is good, as is your attendance and enjoyment of school
- you are taught soundly, but some lessons do not challenge you enough
- you benefit from interesting topics to learn, especially through trips and visitors to school
- adults at the school take good care of you, but you need to use your targets in literacy and numeracy to help you improve your work
- the school is led satisfactorily and the adults know what to do to improve it.

We found that some improvements are needed in three main areas and we have asked your teachers to work on these in the coming months:

- make sure that the work you do is not too easy or too difficult so that you are all challenged to do your best
- make sure that governors ask more questions about how well the school is doing
- make more checks on the improvements being made to your lessons.

You can help by using every opportunity in lessons to think and learn on your own.

With best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely,

Sue Orpin Lead inspector

Annex B

4 October 2007

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Lead inspector