

Tickford Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135107
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	316313
Inspection dates	5–6 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Enid Korn

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	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Hawkes
Headteacher	Mrs A Tobia
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Avon Close Newport Pagnell MK16 9EH
Telephone number	01908 610431
Fax number	01908 617094

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Tickford Park is a large primary school serving the local area of Newport Pagnell and the villages of Moulsoe, Sherington, North Crawley and Stoke Goldington. Pupils from Newport Pagnell start the school aged four years in the Reception class. Around twenty pupils from the villages start in Year 3. Most pupils are of White British heritage and others come from a variety of backgrounds, a small proportion of whom are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is well below average. Mostly, these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs. The school was established seventeen months ago following the amalgamation of Lovat Middle School and Riverside First School. The school has just received the Artsmark Silver award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tickford Park is a good school, where pupils achieve well. The headteacher has realised her objective of merging two former schools into a cohesive unit. There has been good progress towards the school's high aspirations. New assessment systems have helped to identify under-achieving pupils and, as a result, appropriate support programmes are now in place. The headteacher recognises the need to refine the use of the assessment information, so that leaders can evaluate the work of the school even further to eradicate any remaining areas of under-achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully communicated their commitment to raising achievement to the senior management team and key subject co-ordinators. The start made by senior leaders in establishing the new school shows they have the capacity to improve further.

Last year, at the end of Year 6, standards were above average overall and, in English, they were particularly high. These results represented satisfactory progress from the pupils' starting points at the end of Year 2. The current pupils in Key Stage 2 are making good progress. In Year 2, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 has also increased from 2007. The school's tracking information shows that the current Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, leading to pupils having a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and an outstandingly good knowledge of how to keep safe. Pupils enjoy their schooling because relationships are good and their work is interesting. The extent to which the merger into the new school has been successful is shown in the pupils' extremely strong commitment to their school community. Many pupils are eager to act independently and take responsibility such as through the school council or by acting as play-leaders or mediators. Pupils' involvement in the local community extends to raising funds for hosting pupils from Chernobyl.

Effective monitoring has developed a unity of approach in many key aspects of teaching and learning. The school is aiming towards developing pupils as independent learners. To this end, teachers make clear to pupils what they are to learn. Pupils are well motivated and work well together. Teachers plan carefully, supporting and including those identified as needing additional help, enabling these pupils to achieve well. However, there are times when the planned tasks are not sufficiently challenging for the more able learners.

The school has recently restructured its curriculum, which now effectively promotes pupils' personal development and promotes good levels of enjoyment. Literacy skills are used well to develop learning in other subjects. Effective use is made of setting in mathematics at Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils are taught in mixed aged classes and at times the work planned does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils of different ability.

The care, guidance and support provided are good and meet all legal requirements. The academic guidance is good. Marking is informative, making clear to the pupils what they need to do to improve. All pupils have targets to guide their learning but they are not always as specific as they should be to help pupils become independent in their learning.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage is outstandingly effective because of the very thorough arrangements for getting to know the children and their families before they start, and because of the excellent teaching that uses exciting and interesting activities very skilfully to promote the children's learning and enjoyment. The members of staff in the Reception classes work together closely, sharing their different expertise. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, and both are well used to extend the children's thinking. A stimulating programme of activities covers all the areas of learning and makes strong connections between them. Well-established routines make it easy for the children to play and work together and develop their social skills. The teachers build up a detailed knowledge of what the children know and can do through visiting them in their pre-school settings and in their homes. These records are the basis for the careful observations and assessments that continue during their time in the Foundation Stage and ensure that the children make good progress in their learning and their skills. The current Reception year entered with standards generally as expected for their age. They make good progress due to this outstanding provision and are on track to enter Year 1 with standards above those expected.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the use of assessment data to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged and make the progress of which they are capable.
- Involve pupils further in the target setting processes in order to extend their independence as learners.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

School assessments show that the current Year 6 are on track to reach well above average standards; this represents good progress and an improvement on last year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with moderate learning difficulties, make good progress because their targets are suitably challenging and they receive good support. The current Year 2 have broadly average standards overall, with an above average proportion reaching the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in sustained above average attendance. They have very positive attitudes to learning and talk about teachers being 'kind and friendly, making lessons fun'. Such attitudes are underpinned by the strong level of care that teachers and teaching assistants provide. Behaviour is good overall and it was exemplary in many classes and around the school during the inspection. Pupils feel safe in the school, free from any harassment and are confident that there is an adult to turn to should they have any concerns. Pupils understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and many participate in the extra-curricular sports and physical education (PE) activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social development is good. They reflect on the circumstances of less fortunate people and comment on the excellent level of mutual support that exists in the school. Pupils' understanding of multicultural issues

is less well developed, and this has been raised through special events such as 'Show Racism the Red Card'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers manage their pupils well. Lessons are well organised and carefully structured so that teachers and their assistants can work with small groups and individuals. Their support is well matched to the needs of lower ability pupils and those identified as not making sufficient progress and particularly good for those with learning disabilities. Tasks that challenge the higher attainers and provide opportunities for independent learning are not as consistently well planned. Teachers have a good relationship with the pupils and they make each pupil feel valued. Lessons are made interesting and pupils enjoy their learning. In most lessons, pupils are involved well but, in a few, pupils can be seated for too lengthy a period and they then become restless. Teachers all have good questioning skills and, when appropriate, they probe well to illicit pupils' opinions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well. Planning is effective and takes account of different groups of pupils so that work and support are generally matched well to abilities. The provision for those with visual and hearing impairments is specific to their needs, making good use of resources such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Opportunities are provided for those who are gifted and talented, for example through the Explorers' Club but this provision does not yet fully challenge these pupils. Learning through structured play to provide continuity between Reception and Key Stage 1 is developing. The expertise of the Foundation Stage staff to help make best use of these opportunities has been under-utilised. French is taught throughout the school. There is good provision for Personal, Social and Health Education with this subject being timetabled, as well as being interwoven through the curriculum. Opportunities for extra-curricular clubs are wide-ranging. Special events are used to enhance the curriculum and community links are well established, for example in sports provision. The school correctly identifies that links between subject areas need further development and that there are insufficient planned opportunities for promoting pupils' independence in learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and members of staff have appropriate training to ensure that children are safe and secure and that any medical needs are met. The headteacher takes particular care to monitor the progress and well-being of the small number of vulnerable pupils, liaising with a range of other agencies when appropriate. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well organised to give them full access to the curriculum. These pupils are involved in setting their targets through their individual education plans, which are clearly expressed in child-friendly language and are regularly reviewed. Other pupils also receive useful academic guidance through the regular setting of targets in literacy and mathematics. However, the way that these targets are used varies too widely between classes, and the pupils themselves

are not always sufficiently involved in setting them and assessing whether they have reached them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Outstanding leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher has provided a clear vision for the school that is ambitious and developed through a secure evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school now has accurate assessment data to show how well each pupil is progressing and this information is used well to identify under-achievement of individuals, a school priority. The leadership skills of the senior management team and key subject co-ordinators are developing well. Whilst their monitoring has been effective in identifying areas for development, it is not yet sufficiently focused on evaluating the outcomes of the school's work. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well and have helped to drive the establishment of the new school. The majority of parents are supportive of the school. Comments such as that the children '...thrive and reach their full potential' sum up most parental responses.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
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	1
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	1
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?	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?	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

20 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tickford Park Primary School, Newport Pagnell, MK16 9EH

The inspectors were very pleased to visit your school. We found that it provides you with a good education.

Thank you for making us feel welcome. We really enjoyed talking to you and visiting your lessons during the two days.

You all work hard with your teachers and we agree with the many parents who say that you are very well looked after.

We were impressed by the many clubs and other activities that you have. We enjoyed your allotment and seeing your art work from your art club. We have noticed your commitment to the local community and to collecting money to help the children of Chernobyl. We also noticed how much you all enjoy your school. Your teachers make the lessons interesting for you and they ask you some good questions.

We have asked the teachers to give you more opportunities to discuss your targets and to use these more to help you work independently. We think that your teachers need to make sure that you continue to do well by making sure that they give you work that stretches you.

You can all help by making sure that you continue to work as hard as you can.

Well done, and I wish you all the very best,

Yours sincerely

Enid Korn

Lead Inspector