

# Tanfield Lea Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131545
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	319551
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Clarke

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)	225
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 Joe Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Kay Hemmings
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<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>	Tanfield Lea Stanley County Durham DH9 9LU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 234500

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	319551

**Fax number**

01207 238714

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2-3 October 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average size primary school opened in September 2007 following the amalgamation of the neighbouring infant and junior schools. The school serves a village community near Stanley in North West Durham. Parts of the locality are disadvantaged and an above average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British families. Others come from mainly Asian families with a very small number learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those with a statement of special educational need, is well above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Tanfield Lea is a good school. Children thrive because the headteacher, ably assisted by her new senior team, provides very clear educational direction for all staff. Together, they successfully promote the school's aim to develop the whole child and foster the ideal that every child does matter. This is a very inclusive school where, when taking every pupil's background and starting point into account, their accomplishments reflect good achievement and personal development. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall, and exceptional progress in writing. The school forges very effective partnerships, especially with parents, the church, the local community, and schools abroad. Together, they widen pupils' understanding, enhance their well-being and make an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. Well-established links with a nearby nursery and with parents, aided by supportive documentation, help ease the transition to school. Parents have a very high degree of confidence in the school. One sums up their views: 'The teachers and headteacher are very dedicated to helping children achieve their potential. School facilities are very good and there is a wide range of extra-curriculum activities available to the children and parents.'

Reception class children make satisfactory progress. They make greater gains in their personal and mathematical development than in communication and language development. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress to reach standards that are broadly average. The new school acted promptly to tackle the weaknesses in writing it identified throughout the school and began an initiative to raise standards. Pupils had only been here for two terms before the statutory assessments for Years 2 and 6 and, even though the writing project is not fully in place, it is already paying obvious dividends. In both Years 2 and 6, provisional results for writing in the 2008 statutory assessments exceeded challenging targets. Reading results were on target in Years 2 and 6. Mathematics results were on target in Year 2 but in Year 6 they fell to below target, notably at the higher levels where more able pupils did not do as well as expected.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and assemblies. They act safely and considerately inside and outdoors. They are confident and polite. Pupils enjoy school, are delighted when they do well and happily share the success of others. The school monitors absence rigorously and celebrates good attendance but, despite determined action, attendance overall remains stubbornly broadly average. Pupils have a good grasp of the need for healthy eating and take part enthusiastically in physical activities. They contribute exceptionally well in many ways to their school and wider community. Well developed social skills and sound basic skills ensure pupils are well prepared for their future.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The school accurately identifies priorities for raising achievement. The leadership team and governing body have successfully initiated key improvements and their determination to improve provision has paid dividends. Good achievement and personal development represents good value for money. Teachers help pupils know how well they are doing, and how to take their next steps in their learning. The school sets and uses challenging targets. The firm resolve of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors to aim higher, coupled with a clear track record of progress since opening, indicates a good capacity for improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) gives children a sound start to their primary school education. Parents are very pleased with the way their children settle. Children's confidence soon grows and they respond positively to the activities arranged for them in an exciting inside and outdoors environment.

Teaching overall is satisfactory. Children are encouraged to participate and their choice of activities is carefully monitored and guided. When children begin Reception, most have skills and knowledge below those typical for this age group, particularly in language and personal development. By the end of Reception last year, an average number reached expected levels in mathematical development but fewer reached expected levels for communication and language development. None exceeded the early learning goals in these areas. Their achievement is satisfactory.

Staff offer a good level of care and ensure appropriate support which reflects that they hold the welfare of children in the highest regard. They emphasise courtesy and consideration, and with well established routines, they enable children to form positive relationships. Occasionally though, adults intervene too frequently in child-initiated activities and this in turn holds back children's development of confidence and independence. Although the majority of children reached the goals expected of them in their personal development last year, few exceeded expectations.

The leadership is developing a systematic approach to promote higher achievement. They arrange and organise facilities for learning well. Although, arrangements for the assessment system do not yet make full use of information about children's progress to foster individual learning. The leadership shows determination to improve but it is too early in the development of the EYFS for their recently implemented approaches to take effect.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the use of information and procedures to foster good achievement, especially in communication and language development, in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Raise standards in mathematics, especially for the more able pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. When they join the school, their skills and abilities are lower than those typically seen in children of the same age. Pupils in Year 2 made good progress during the past year. Their provisional results show they met challenging targets in reading, and exceeded them in both writing and mathematics. Results in the Year 6 statutory assessments showed an improvement in English, largely because writing results improved, and exceeded the challenging target set. Mathematics results were lower this year and did not reach the higher level target set because fewer more able and talented pupils reached the higher level. Science results were on target. Standards were broadly similar to the national averages of 2007 but comparative information for 2008 is unavailable at this time. Inspection evidence shows most pupils in Years 4 and 5 made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics although, in Year 3, fewer pupils made good progress. The new writing initiative has been a huge success in improving pupils' abilities. As a result of very effective support, pupils with

learning difficulties make good progress in reading and mathematics and rapid progress in writing to achieve well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Links with the church, the contribution of assemblies and the wide variety of visitors and visits ensure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development too are good. Pupils have a good grasp of healthy eating. They know the value of exercise and take part enthusiastically in physical education and voluntary sports activities. The school deservedly has the Healthy School Award and the Activemark. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in lessons where they work enthusiastically. New initiatives such as the writing project successfully engage their attention. Pupils feel safe in school and value the measures taken to contribute to their welfare. They conduct themselves exceptionally well in classrooms, act very sensibly when moving about the premises and behave considerately in the playground. Pupils say that levels of bullying are low and attribute this to the successful buddy and peer mediator initiatives, which are examples of pupils' outstanding contribution to their school and the wider community. They eagerly participate in a very wide variety of events and support charitable causes. Their endeavour makes a distinct contribution to community cohesion. Pupils develop good social and team-working skills; these, together with their sound basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good. Pupils' progress is good because they are keen to learn in lessons and work industriously, both collaboratively and independently. The exceptional standards of presentation seen in their books reflect the pride pupils take in their work. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly. They have high expectations of pupils and give each pupil a clear understanding of what they are able to accomplish, particularly for writing. Expectations for work in mathematics are less clearly defined. Teaching assistants and helpers are deployed well and make a significant contribution in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to give their views and participate in lessons. Many respond enthusiastically though some younger pupils lack confidence, which reflects their broadly average speaking and listening skills. Teachers reinforce key points at the ends of lessons and consolidate pupils' learning well. Pupils receive good oral and written feedback on how to improve their work. Marking of writing is particularly rigorous, thorough and helpful, but for mathematics marking is more limited to celebrating pupils' accomplishments.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The well-planned good curriculum allows pupils to benefit from a wide and balanced range of activities in all subjects. Daily phonics work with younger pupils, reading activities and a major curriculum development to improve writing are having a very positive impact on language development. The writing initiative in particular sparks pupils' enthusiasm and involvement. Pupils' awareness of their own and the wider community is successfully developed through

links with schools in Spain, Turkey and Greece and through local studies and visits. Together they widen pupils' perspectives of life outside Britain and strengthen their knowledge of their local community and its industrial heritage. Partnerships with local businesses, community associations and the church, and visitors to school, further enrich pupils' skills and understanding. Along with a good range of popular extra curricular activities and time at a residential outdoor activities centre, these help develop team-building skills and add to pupils' good spiritual, physical, social and cultural development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides outstanding pastoral care and other aspects of guidance and support are good. Very well-founded procedures lead to pupils confidently saying they feel safe and well looked after. A well run breakfast club offers suitable activities for the small number who take part. Rigorous procedures for child protection and health and safety safeguard the welfare of pupils: arrangements meet government requirements and advice. Behaviour is monitored and managed in an effective way. Effective deployment of support staff ensures pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good and sometimes exceptionally good progress, especially in writing. The more able and talented pupils are identified and helped to meet challenging targets, especially in English, but less successfully in mathematics. The school makes good use of its procedures for tracking pupils' progress to pick out those at risk of falling behind; for example, projects to support better reading are used to good effect.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good leadership and management very successfully promote the caring ethos and positive climate for learning evident throughout the school. The headteacher shows great commitment and resolve to develop and improve the new school. The new leadership team also show a strong team spirit and sense of purpose to enhance this process. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in partnership with the headteacher to have a very clear knowledge of the school, which leads them to make a broadly accurate self-evaluation, and give priority to raising standards in their well-thought-out development plan. They know their next step is to develop their role in systematically gaining a first hand view of the school's work. A particularly strong feature is the outstanding contribution the school makes to community cohesion. Governors and the leadership team very successfully promote partnerships to enhance the community the school serves. They ensure pupils have a global perspective by participation in the Comenius project to foster international cooperation. Good quality leadership and management are responsible for pupils achieving well and reflect good value for money. The school's determined and well-thought-through strategies, which are already increasing pupils' motivation to learn and make considerable progress in writing, indicate a good capacity for further improvement.



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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<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	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	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

6 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tanfield Lea Community Primary School, Durham, DH9 9LU

Mr Hall and I really enjoyed our recent visit to inspect your school. Thank you for helping us when we came into your classrooms and assembly to see you at work. You were very polite and helpful and we did enjoy talking with those of you whom we met. We were pleased to see how much you like to take part enthusiastically in activities during and after school, how you value the help you get and the friendships you make. You are well behaved and polite to others in lessons and outside. We were pleased to see how you contribute to school life, for example, as school councillors, buddies, and mediators, and how you help others who are less fortunate than you. I know the headteacher and all the staff are very proud of you.

Your school gives you a good education. It is warm and welcoming and well organised. All the adults in the school look after you very well and that is why you feel safe and happy. Last year, many children in the Reception classes made satisfactory progress, but some did not make the expected progress in reading, writing and speaking. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 made good progress, especially in writing because you have been involved in a new writing project. We noted that last year pupils in Year 6 did not do as well in mathematics at the highest level. We were especially pleased that pupils who get extra help did really well. When we looked at your books we were pleased to see how much care you take to make your work neat. We saw how teachers tell you how well you are doing and, especially in your writing books, how you can improve.

I have asked your teachers in the Reception class to help you to learn more about reading, writing and speaking because you will use these skills more and more when you are older. I have also asked them to help you all learn to use mathematics in many interesting ways so as many of you as possible can reach the highest level.

You have very many opportunities at Tanfield Lea Primary School to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Best wishes

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector