

Twyning School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115547
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326220
Inspection date	23 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	113
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	Simon Gillespie
Headteacher	Richard Vaughan
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Twyning Green Twyning Tewkesbury GL20 6DF
Telephone number	01684 293577
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the proportion of pupils working above age-related national expectations and on track to attain well above average standards
- how effectively leaders check the school's performance
- examples of outstanding elements in pupils' personal development
- the most important features in the teaching and curriculum that lead the school to judge both as good.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Twyning School is smaller than average. Pupils are taught in four classes, each comprising two year groups. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a new classroom with a few of the Year 1 pupils. Almost all the pupils come from the village of Twyning and the surrounding rural area. A very small minority live in a permanent site for Travellers. Almost all pupils are White British and all speak English as their first language. A breakfast and after-school club are provided on site by the school's governing body.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and their personal development and well-being are good. This is because good leadership and management ensure they are taught well and receive good levels of care, guidance and support. Parents appreciate the school's many qualities and the very large majority of those who replied to the inspectors' survey endorsed the school's work. Comments such as 'our children are happy at school and progressing well' and 'the school cares for and listens to my children' were common threads in the views received and there was no discernible pattern within the few concerns raised. The headteacher is careful to involve the staff in checking the school's work and together they have an accurate view of how the school is doing and what needs to improve. The school is well placed to improve further, having maintained its previous strengths and effectively addressed areas for development identified in the last inspection.

With relatively few pupils in each year group, standards of work vary from one year to the next but are above average overall and often well above average, especially in reading and mathematics. The attainment of children on entry to the school is above national expectations. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. Standards are consolidated in Years 1 and 2 during which time they make sound progress. Progress accelerates throughout Years 3 to 6 and is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and some of these pupils make exceptionally good progress as a result of carefully managed support programmes. Most of the more able pupils also make good progress. However, the school is aware that by the end of Year 2 a proportion of these do not achieve high enough standards, especially in writing, given their earlier starting points. To a lesser degree this pattern is repeated at the end of Year 6, as seen in standards attained in national tests. The school has already responded to this by introducing new initiatives to raise standards in writing, but it is too soon to see any significant impact from these.

The school is developing comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress, and these are shared with class teachers helping them to plan appropriately challenging work. However, there are a few inconsistencies in the data and the way they are presented that make it difficult for the school to use or check the validity of long-term targets. A few of the targets for more able pupils are not challenging enough, particularly for the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been set mainly challenging targets, making good use of assessment information, and nearly three quarters of them are on track to exceed national expectations, especially in reading. Almost all pupils' attendance rates are good but a very small minority are frequently absent and this has an adverse impact on their achievement and standards as well as on the overall attendance rates in school, which are average. By the time they leave the school, pupils are well equipped with the skills needed for the next stage of education and adult life, including good collaborative skills and the ability to use computers.

Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and are thoughtful in the way they treat others. Many of them take on roles to help around the school, such as being school councillors or buddies caring for younger pupils, and they participate eagerly in fund raising events such as the Christmas shoe box appeal. However, there are relatively few opportunities to become involved or contribute to the wider community and pupils' awareness of Britain's cultural diversity, while satisfactory, is not as strong as other elements of their personal development. Pupils are exceptionally clear about the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise. The school has a healthy school award in recognition

of its good work in this aspect. All those asked knew how to keep themselves safe and reported feeling totally safe in school. Inspectors received unanimous agreement on this from the parents. The school implements procedures designed to safeguard pupils and it maintains a training programme for all staff.

The good curriculum is broad and is strengthened, as is the quality of the teaching, by the specialist subject knowledge available in several subjects including sport, mathematics and the use of computers. The school has conducted an initial audit on how it promotes community cohesion, but recognises it needs to provide more planned experiences at local, national and international level. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the school is expanding the range of planned opportunities for the most able. Teachers usually ensure work is matched to the wide range of abilities in their mixed-year classes, but occasionally introductions are too long and there are unnecessary delays before more able pupils are set to work on challenging activities. The curriculum is enriched well, for example through inter-school sports competitions and residential visits. The good teaching is characterised by the imaginative and stimulating activities planned and this contributes to pupils' very obvious enjoyment of school. An example of this was seen when a group of pupils were totally absorbed in the very messy process of felt making. The school is adopting innovative approaches to involving pupils more in reflecting on their learning and this is boosting their overall progress. Older ones, in particular, can confidently use terms such as 'learning objectives' and 'success criteria' and become engaged in assessing each other's work, which they do sensitively and perceptively. These are contributory factors to the good academic guidance being established.

The whole staff team shows a high level of commitment to support those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for these pupils is very well led and managed and there is effective liaison with parents and external specialists such as speech therapists. The breakfast and after-school clubs are well led and make good provision within a safe and positive atmosphere. The headteacher, despite having a substantial class teaching commitment, provides a clear lead. He establishes the clarity of overall direction whilst encouraging colleagues to take on leadership roles. Good examples of this include the way the roles of subject leaders have become effective and how various leaders have successfully promoted new approaches to involve pupils in thinking about their learning. Governance is good. Governors are exceptionally well led and are fully involved in strategic decision making. The school has effective systems for checking its performance and a clear plan of how to improve, but does not always formally record some of its findings or working practices. Governors are in the process of reviewing all their policies and strengthening the way they check that the school is recording how they are implemented.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and has improved following the move into new, purpose-built, permanent accommodation, providing increased space and areas for children to play and learn. The well-planned induction to school helps children settle in well at the start of the year and also each morning as they are met and greeted at the door. Good levels of welfare are maintained throughout and further supported by the buddies in Class 4. Good teaching ensures children make good progress in all areas of learning, including personal and emotional development, and by the end of the year a higher proportion than usual meet all the learning goals expected for their age, although few exceed them. They make most

progress in mathematical, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The teacher and her assistant carefully plan a good balance of experiences, especially within the new classroom. The secure and designated outdoor area is relatively small and the school recognises this is not used to best advantage. The team is led well and works together effectively. The staff plan activities to capture the children's interests, having carefully observed the children's responses, and they ensure there is an appropriate balance of activities led by an adult and times for children to play independently. They make good use of praise and rewards and this encourages the children to do their best.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure more pupils significantly exceed age-related standards, especially in writing and particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Refine the systems for tracking pupils' progress so the information collected can be easily interpreted and used more effectively to set end-of-year targets.
- Provide more planned opportunities to promote community cohesion and pupils' awareness of Britain's cultural diversity.

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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	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
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?	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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

Dear Children

Inspection of Twyning School, Tewkesbury, GL20 6DF

- Thank you for the way you made us feel very welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and visiting all of your classrooms. Twyning School is a good school and we were pleased to discover how much you like all the interesting things on offer in school. Here are some of the highlights we found during our visit.
- You work hard and make good progress in lessons. We were impressed by how well you collaborate in small groups and support each other.
- Your teachers plan interesting things for you to do and try to make sure your work is not too easy or too difficult. They are good at helping you to think about what it is you have learnt and how you can improve.
- You behave well in class and around the school and lots of you help out by doing various jobs.
- You know a great deal about how important it is to eat healthy food and take lots of exercise.
- Everyone who works in the school takes good care of you and is ready to help if you have a problem. We were pleased to find that you are exceptionally thoughtful about ways to stay safe.
- Your headteacher and the other leaders and governors are always thinking of ways to improve the school.
- We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on three things to make the school even better.
- Find ways of helping even more of you to reach high standards in your work, especially in writing.
- Improve the way the school collects and uses information about the progress you have made and what targets should be set.
- Help you to learn more about communities across Britain beyond your local area, and their different needs, ideas and customs.

We know you will have ideas about how to improve the school and will want to share them at a meeting of the school council.

Yours faithfully

Martin Kerly

Lead inspector