

Tarleton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119158
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	326955
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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)	290
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	Mrs Helen Dicker
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Fleming
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hesketh Lane Tarleton Preston Lancashire PR4 6AT

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Inspection number	326955

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is larger than the average primary school. It has provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average and most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, but above average for the pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. An independent provider runs before and after-school care on the premises.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tarleton Community Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. Parents are right to value the education their children are getting. A typical comment being, 'The school creates a very warm and welcoming atmosphere where pupils and parents can feel at ease. Children thrive and come home motivated.' Pupils say they enjoy coming to school because there are lots of activities and they learn in a fun way. Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin the excellent behaviour. Consequently, pupils are confident to express their views and have good attitudes towards school, preparing them well for the next stage in their education. The school gives good value for money.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Children make a good start in the Reception class and enter Year 1 with standards just above average. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 so that when they leave in Year 6 standards are well above the national average. However, pupils do not always make enough progress in writing and standards are broadly average. The quality of presentation does not always do justice to pupils' abilities. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Pupils are kind and polite to each other and know right from wrong. Pupils have an advanced understanding of their local culture but this is not matched by their knowledge of the richness and diversity of British culture.

Behaviour is excellent because many pupils have developed very good levels of self-discipline. They support each other in lessons and particularly enjoy working in groups and pairs on practical work. Pupils develop a good awareness of taking responsibility in the school and in the local community.

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' achievement across the school is good because of the quality of teaching. Progress is usually carefully tracked and effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is provided by a good team of support staff. Enthusiastic teachers plan lessons that capture the imagination of pupils so that they are interested and engaged. However, in a few lessons teaching is not sufficiently challenging to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The curriculum is good and supports teaching and learning well. It is successfully broadened by a wide range of well-supported clubs, available at lunchtime and after school. The care, guidance and support of pupils is good overall, including academic guidance. There are good systems in place to identify pupils needing support but this does not always take account of challenge for the more able pupils. When required the school makes good use of links with outside agencies to help support pupils individual needs.

Leadership and management are good and gives the school a good capacity to improve in future. The headteacher is well supported by her staff and governing body and all are committed to raising standards. Governors provide good support for the school, as both a critical friend and by holding the school to account through their monitoring role. The senior leadership team and governing body, ensures that the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils have an advanced understanding of their local culture but this is not matched by their knowledge of the richness and diversity of British culture.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of provision in the EYFS is good. Children enter the Reception class with levels of basic skills in line with those typical for their age, particularly in writing, but this can vary from year-to-year. Children's progress is checked regularly and provides a clear picture of what they need to learn next. This means that by the start of Year 1 children are reaching standards that are just above average with strengths in reading and mathematical calculation. Relationships between staff and parents are good and children settle readily into their first year in school. Children are very well nurtured and cared for in a safe and stimulating environment. The indoor curriculum is well planned with a range of stimulating activities that consolidate and support early learning. Children make good progress in their speaking and listening and talk confidently about designing, making and painting their dinosaurs and how we no longer see these animals out and about. Other children are welcomed when they visit the garage to fill their car with petrol. The school is aware of the need to improve the outdoor learning area so that it becomes an extension of the classroom and enriches the learning environment and there are plans in place to do this. Children behave well and enjoy the many opportunities to learn. There is a good balance between activities led by teachers and those developed by children themselves. Children's personal development and well-being is good. They work and play well together, enjoying friendships and taking responsibilities. Leadership and management are good and ensure that adults plan together as a team and have a clear understanding about how young children learn. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by teaching assistants and achieve well. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children's welfare needs are fully catered for.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency in teaching ensuring all lessons are sufficiently challenging especially for the more able pupils.
- Raise standards in writing including the presentation of pupils' work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school is accurate in its judgement that the pupils' achievement is good and that standards are above average. By the start of Year 1, standards are just above average for their age. Good progress in Key Stage 1 results in standards rising to being above, and at times well above, average. In 2008, Year 2 pupils reached standards that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion surpassing the levels expected for their age was particularly high. In 2007, results at Key Stage 2 were above average with particular strengths in English and mathematics. Unvalidated data for 2008 indicates that the school's challenging targets for Year 6 were not met. This was due to a dip in the proportion exceeding expectations for their age and these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. However, progress is improving in the problem solving aspect in mathematics. Standards in writing are average but the presentation of work could be better. The school has acted swiftly to raise standards. Progress is improving in aspects of mathematics, for example, in problem-solving and also in writing in English. The quality of pupils' handwriting, however, does not do justice to pupils' abilities and the range and breadth of writing is too narrow.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They love learning, which is a key factor in the good attendance. Behaviour is excellent in response to good teaching and a safe and secure environment. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own cultures but are less informed limited about others. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and have an excellent appreciation of the importance of staying safe and caring for others. They make a strong contribution to their school and the wider community. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to express their views, for example, as members of the school council where supportive staff willingly adopt their perceptive ideas. They raise funds for school equipment and are proud of the fact they have their own budget. When pupils are given responsibilities they respond with enthusiasm, for example, taking on the role of healthy food monitor or when Year 6 pupils help younger ones to read and partner them in assembly. All of these experiences, combined with above average standards, prepare pupils well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and occasionally outstanding. Lessons are planned creatively with due consideration to the needs of learners. Teaching is enhanced by the welcoming, well-resourced classrooms, which are supportive to learning. Pupils are clear about what they are learning and understand what is expected of them. Occasionally, where teaching is less effective, work is not challenging enough to extend learning especially for the more able pupils. For example, teachers' expectations of the presentation of written work are not high enough. Good opportunities, however, are provided for pupils to learn from one another. Homework is used effectively to encourage learning beyond school. Pupils have a good knowledge of their personal targets for improvement in English and to a lesser extent in mathematics and science. Well trained teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Marking, whilst up-to-date, varies in quality and at its best, offers constructive advice about how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a good curriculum, which helps them to achieve well both in their academic and personal development. It is currently being adapted to increase opportunities for pupils to apply their skills of writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. A whole-school focus on developing art and design and technology skills is enabling pupils to apply their basic skills to other subjects. Pupils are enthused by practical activities and educational visits. They talk animatedly about dressing up in medieval costumes during an educational visit and exploring the school grounds to 'discover' rocks which they eagerly name. Good provision exists for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but strategies for supporting the more able are not yet refined enough. Music provision is outstanding with a high number of pupils learning to play instruments or sing in the choir.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff and pupils value and respect each other. Pupils express great confidence in their teachers and support staff, knowing that any problems they face will be dealt with successfully. Parents rightly feel that this is a very caring school where pupils' personal development is given a high priority. All staff are totally committed to maintaining pupils' health and safety and procedures for safeguarding pupils and maintaining child protection meet requirements. Good systems have been developed to assess and track the academic achievement and progress of pupils. As a result, good mechanisms have been established to identify pupils who are underachieving. This is having a marked impact on the quality of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but is not yet being used well enough to ensure that more able pupils consistently do as well as they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. In leading the school the headteacher has made certain that the school has improved since the last inspection. The senior leadership team, governors and staff work extremely well together as a team to raise standards and set a good tone and atmosphere for learning. Subject leaders have an excellent understanding of their subjects and carry out their role well in monitoring, tracking pupils' progress and planning for school improvement. The contribution to community cohesion is good. The school has valuable and productive links with the local community. Parents have a positive view of the school and their support is a real strength. They take advantage of the opportunities to be involved with their children's learning by attending workshops to help them become familiar with approaches to literacy and numeracy.

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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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tarleton Community Primary School, Lancashire, PR4 6AT

We are writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we inspected your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and have good memories of how friendly you were, not just towards us but also towards each other and your teachers. The teachers care for you well and we were impressed with the care and friendliness you show towards each other. Everyone was polite and we particularly liked how well Year 6 pupils looked after younger children during assembly. I think Year 6 pupils also enjoyed the penguin dance!

We looked at many parts of school life, including how teachers help you to understand about being healthy. When we asked you about this we were very impressed by how much you knew about the importance of healthy food, regular exercise and how to keep safe.

It was good to see that you raise funds for charity and help in your community. We have asked your headteacher if she can also include visits to areas further away from Tarleton so that you are able to find out how other people live, for example in Preston or in places even further away.

We enjoyed spending time in each of your classrooms, not just watching you learning inside, although that was good, but outside as well. Your teachers work very hard and they are going to do more things to help you improve your learning. When we looked at your books it was good to see how teachers mark your work in writing so that it helps you to know how you can improve, but we have also asked them to help you make your work neater. Teachers always try to do their very best for you and we were able to say that their teaching is good. I think this is helped because they plan exciting lessons for you, this is called the curriculum and your school has a good curriculum. We have also asked them to challenge you much more, in all areas of the curriculum, so that many of you can achieve higher levels.

We were pleased to tell your headteacher that yours is a good school. We know how proud the school is of all you do. Well done!

Yours sincerely

Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector