

# Tilney St Lawrence Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120884
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	327382
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Messer

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)	100
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 John Day
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carolyn Howard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2006
<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>	School Road Tilney St Lawrence Kings Lynn Norfolk PE34 4QZ

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 February 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	327382

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

There are four classes in this small village school. The attainment of most, but not all, children on entry to the school is very low, especially in communication, language and literacy. An exceptionally high proportion of pupils enter or leave the school part way through this phase of their education. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average and in some year groups it is exceptionally high. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties associated with communication, language and literacy. The school attracts a high proportion of pupils who have found it difficult to adjust to larger schools, many of whom are from urban areas. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few speak English as an additional language. Several pupils come from an international travelling circus that winters in the village. The school is part of a federation of three primary schools that work together in partnership under the leadership of one headteacher and one governing body. It has the Artsmark gold award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Activemark for its work in developing physical education (PE).

## 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 make good progress often from very low starting points. Good teaching helps pupils to learn effectively so that by the end of Year 6 they attain standards that are broadly average. The leadership and management of the school are key strengths. The headteacher, ably supported by the assistant headteacher, provides excellent leadership. The partnership of three federated village schools, managed by one headteacher and a single governing body, is developing as a very strong unit that enables the school to flourish.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. They are polite, sensitive to the needs of others and well behaved. They work and play happily together. Newcomers are warmly welcomed and quickly settle in. Pupils report that there is no bullying and that any incidents of unkindness are quickly sorted out. Pupils develop a sound range of key skills, including the ability to use computers competently. This, coupled with their good attitudes to learning and well developed social skills, prepares them well for the next phase of their learning and their future lives. Pupils know about how to lead healthy lifestyles, stay safe and look after themselves. Pastoral care is a real strength and pupils are also given clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work. Two Parent Support Advisers are based in the school and provide valuable advice for families who might be experiencing difficulties, strengthening links between home and school. As part of the wide and good quality and enriching curriculum offered, art and design feature strongly and pupils produce work of high quality. For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, opportunities to explore the curriculum through outdoor play are underdeveloped.

Teachers are particularly good at motivating pupils. Pupils are keen to learn and eager to succeed. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and are bubbling with enthusiasm for learning more about their world. When they join the school, many have very limited vocabularies and do not fully understand the meaning of ordinary everyday words. However, teachers miss some opportunities to explain the meaning of words that are used during lessons and lesson plans do not always highlight the key vocabulary that is to be introduced. This can limit pupils' development of language skills and contribute to the low standards attained by some pupils in literacy.

The majority of parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. One commented, 'My child receives a great education and enjoys the excellent variety of activities in the curriculum'. A small minority feel communication between home and school could be improved and that the school should do more to seek parents' views. Inspection findings show that communication between home and school is good. The school regularly encourages parents to express their views about provision through surveys, at termly parents' evenings and at informal coffee mornings run by the Parent Support Advisers. Informative newsletters are provided and the school's website is regularly updated.

The partnership with two other local schools enables pupils to mix with their peers from other villages, go on joint visits, sing together in the cluster choir, share facilities and compete in sporting events. The collaboration between the schools broadens pupils' horizons and particularly helps them when they transfer to secondary school because they have a much larger circle of friends. These links make an excellent contribution to pupils' well-being. The school does much to promote community cohesion and good links are being forged with a school in Vietnam.

The partnership also supports leadership and teaching as ideas are shared and common difficulties jointly resolved. Subject leaders work across the partnership and this spreads the load of responsibility. The headteacher and her senior leadership team, drawn from staff of each school, work in close liaison and share a common commitment to creating sustainable village schools that work together to provide good learning opportunities for all. Finances are managed well and the partnership enables costs of services and resources to be shared efficiently. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The staff in the Reception class have established a calm, purposeful ethos in which children flourish. Good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils work and play in a safe, secure environment. Children scamper excitedly into the classroom each morning. They enjoy taking part in a good range of stimulating activities. Although a little nervous at first, they had great fun using torches to explore darkness in the specially designed blacked out hut. However, the outside area is poorly developed as a learning resource to stimulate children's curiosity and fire their imaginations. Children enjoy browsing through the good range of colourful books and grasp any opportunity to select books for a 'quick read'. There is a strong emphasis on teaching children letters and the sounds they represent. Children make steady progress in their knowledge of phonics and the faster learners rapidly gain the skills they need to start reading and writing. However, the standards attained by most children are significantly below national averages by the end of the Reception year, especially in communication, language and literacy. The leadership and management of provision are good. Staff keep careful records of each child's development and use records well to identify gaps in learning. They assess children's progress thoroughly and use information well to plan the next steps in learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Grasp every opportunity to extend pupils' vocabulary and their understanding of language in order to raise standards in literacy.
- Develop the outside area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it provides a more stimulating learning environment.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good and from their earliest days in school they make good progress. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress as do the faster learners who often go racing ahead. Those who speak English as an additional language settle in quickly and rapidly learn enough English to make at least as much progress as all the others. In the Reception class staff make sure that basic skills are taught thoroughly before children move to the next steps in their learning. However, many children have poor language skills and significant gaps in their prior learning that limit the standards they attain. Most start Year 1 with standards that are low, particularly in literacy. They make good progress and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving but remain well below average, especially in literacy. The school's analysis of assessment data shows that those pupils who have remained at the school from Key Stage 1 through to the end of Key Stage 2 make better progress than those who have had their learning interrupted by moving schools. Pupils make good progress

in Years 3 to 6 and by Year 6 standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils produce some stunning work in art and design and the quality of their sculptures and work in clay is of a very high standard.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good personal development, including their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, supports their learning well. They have good attitudes to learning and discuss their work sensibly. They get on well with each other and with their friends in the other two partner schools. Older pupils are good at looking after the younger ones and the young play leaders effectively help to organise games for them at playtimes. They enjoy their links with senior citizens who visit the school to teach them how to knit. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities to the wider community. They wholeheartedly support the school's recycling initiatives, whilst the school council carefully considers which charities the school should support. There is further scope for pupils to take a more active role in managing the direction of the school council and in developing an even greater understanding of environmental issues.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers assess pupils' progress thoroughly and are good at identifying gaps in pupils' learning. Assessment data is used well to modify tasks so that they are well matched to pupils' widely varying stages of development. Even in year groups where there is a very high proportion of pupils who find learning difficult, together with high levels of mobility, teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Teachers often note that pupils are not familiar with the meaning of everyday words and that many have a very restricted vocabulary and problems with speech and communication. However, there are still times when not enough emphasis is placed on developing and extending pupils' understanding of language by introducing and explaining new words. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and this contributes positively to pupils' good attitudes to learning and their eagerness to explore, investigate and experiment.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a rich variety of activities that support pupils' learning well. French and Spanish are taught and pupils enjoy learning foreign everyday words and phrases. Music and drama feature strongly. Visitors to the school help to extend pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity in our society, such as a Hindu visitor who explained her customs and beliefs. There are good links with specialist secondary schools to support provision for science and physical education. There is a good range of after school clubs. The gardening club has created a beautiful landscaped area that enhances the environment particularly well. A good start has been made on linking subjects together to create a thematic approach that matches pupils' interests. Leaders are now rightly working towards developing the curriculum further, through extending modern foreign languages and placing greater emphasis on environmental issues, so that the curriculum is even more relevant to pupils' future needs.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Pupils' health and safety are given top priority. Child protection procedures are robust and risk assessments are conducted rigorously. Pupils say that they appreciate the safe and secure environment provided. They would have no hesitation in sharing any worries with teachers or support staff. Each individual is nurtured and the school has fully embraced the belief that every child matters. Teachers' marking gives pupils good advice about how to improve their work. They receive good guidance about road safety, the dangers associated with drugs and how to use the internet safely. Pupils who find learning difficult also receive good support, while those who are gifted or talented join with their peers in the partner schools for special events to extend their learning. There is scope for encouraging pupils to be more independent and to be less reliant on adults for support.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has worked hard to ensure the on-going viability of the three federated schools by forging ever closer links across the partnership. The school monitors its performance well. The progress of every pupil is measured carefully and extra support is provided where necessary. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and appropriate priorities are clearly defined. The single governing body has only just been constituted and so it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness in school development and improvement. However, governors are very experienced, having been drawn from the three former governing bodies, and have good procedures for monitoring provision. They make sure that the school fulfils all legal requirements. The school works extremely hard and effectively to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum and that there is zero tolerance to discrimination. Newcomers, children from circus families and those who speak English as an additional language, are all fully embraced. Leaders are good at making bids for extra funding. The whole school visit to London was funded by a grant, for example. In addition the Friends of the School Association raise substantial sums each year to provide extra facilities. Although the school manages accommodation well, the cramped conditions in its Victorian buildings and the lack of a school hall, places constraints on future development.



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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?	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?	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 <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	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	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?	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**

1 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tilney St Lawrence Primary School, Kings Lynn, PE34 4QZ

I thoroughly enjoyed the two days I spent with you. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

You go to a good school which has many strengths. One great feature is the links you have made with the other schools in the partnership. This helps you to work and play together with a larger circle of friends. It also means that you learn to collaborate with others and benefit from sharing experiences, such as going on visits together. It also helps the staff of the three schools to share ideas and resources.

You are sensible, polite and well behaved. You give newcomers a warm welcome to the school and help them to settle in happily. You are keen to learn new things and you thoroughly enjoy school. Staff take good care of you and pay close attention to your health and safety. You understand how important it is to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise. You know how to avoid danger and look after yourselves. Because the teaching is good, you make good progress so that, by Year 6, most of you reach the standards that pupils across the country reach in English, mathematics and science. Some of you find it hard to master all the skills you need in literacy but you all do your best and work willingly. You are particularly good at art and design. Some of your sculptures are of especially high quality.

There are two main things that I have asked all the adults to do to help improve the school. It is important that teachers fully explain the meaning of new words so that you develop a broader vocabulary. This should help you to write more clearly. Secondly, I have asked that they develop the outside area for children in the Reception class so that it provides them with a more exciting and stimulating learning environment.

I am sure that if you continue to work hard and do your best the school will go from strength to strength.

Yours sincerely

John Messer

Lead inspector