

Trefonen CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123507
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	327927
Inspection date	19 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	129
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	Jill Ferguson
Headteacher	Catherine Dunleavy
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Trefonen Oswestry SY10 9DY
Telephone number	01691 652960
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this small primary school from the village of Trefonen and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. There have been a number of long-term staff absences over the past year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Pupils are exceptionally happy at this satisfactory school. A good curriculum contributes well to pupils' thorough enjoyment of learning and is successful in teaching them to behave well. Recent improvements to provision for children in the EYFS enable them to make a good start to their education.

Teaching between Years 1 and 6 is satisfactory, enabling most pupils in these year groups to build steadily on what they have already learnt. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Pupils do better in mathematics and reading than in writing and science. The school has concentrated well on building the pupils' confidence in mathematics and improving their understanding of how to carry out calculations. Pupils are not as skilled at writing because they have too few opportunities to write quickly and accurately across the curriculum. In science, teachers do not always match work closely enough to pupils' differing needs and, when this happens, some pupils, especially the more able, do less well than they should. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants to help them reach their individual targets. The school has started to set challenging targets for all pupils to ensure that their progress is more even across the school.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are evident in their exceptionally healthy lifestyles and very thorough knowledge of how to stay safe. They develop excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and are particularly polite and friendly. They make an outstanding contribution to the community through the school council and by carrying out many special jobs in school and the local community. For example, older pupils enjoy being 'Energy Busters' by ensuring that energy is not wasted. The school prepares the pupils adequately for the next stage of education and later life; pupils develop sound basic skills and are articulate and responsible. There are some good features to teaching in all classes. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and provide them with worthwhile activities to make learning interesting. Valuable additional activities such as clubs, visitors and visits boost the pupils' enjoyment of school and help them to learn. The curriculum provides exceptionally good opportunities for pupils to learn how to be good citizens.

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Members of staff are very caring and support pupils' pastoral needs very well. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers carry out frequent assessments to monitor pupils' progress, although these procedures are more established in English and mathematics than in other subjects. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is committed to raising standards and, together with other members of staff, ensures that pupils' well-being is a priority. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent initiatives are already speeding up the rate of pupils' progress, especially in the EYFS. The school is demonstrating that it has the necessary capacity to improve further, although several long-term absences have slowed the pace of change over the past two years. Subject leaders recognise that they are not all monitoring the impact of initiatives on the progress of all pupils rigorously enough.

There is a good partnership between home and school. Most parents are very pleased that their children come to this school. They make positive comments such as, 'My child is thoroughly enjoying his time at Trefonen school' and 'The dedicated staff work very hard to help pupils

become confident and responsible individuals.' These comments reflect what the school is already doing really well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the EYFS has improved significantly since the last inspection and it is now good. On entry to the EYFS, most children are working at the levels typically expected for this age group, and standards rise to above average by the start of Year 1. Good teaching ensures that children are achieving well, with members of staff providing well for the differing ages and abilities in the mixed-age class. Children's personal development is good. Adults plan exciting activities indoors and outside, such as a project on 'Superheroes', to motivate and engage children. There is a happy buzz in lessons and children support each other well. Adults prioritise the children's welfare and provide calm and sensitive support as needed. Members of staff manage behaviour well and explain tasks clearly, although occasionally they miss opportunities to extend children's learning when they are working independently. For example, whilst children are good at 'planning' where they are going to work, adults do not always check that children follow these plans through. Good leadership and management ensure that members of staff frequently review provision and take action when needed. Leaders are making increasingly good use of assessment information to monitor trends over time so that they can identify any areas for development even more quickly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater opportunities for pupils to write quickly and accurately across the curriculum.
- Ensure that work in science meets pupils' differing needs closely, especially for the more able.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders in ensuring that progress across subjects is more even.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the EYFS where standards have been rising over the past year. They make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Pupils make best progress in speaking, listening, learning to read and mathematics, because teachers promote these skills well. Recent strategies have helped improve the content of pupils' writing, but they still write too slowly and do not always check their work well enough for careless errors. In science, teachers do not always meet pupils' differing needs closely enough and the more able pupils in particular do not show independence in the way they write up investigations or what they have learnt. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident in their good attendance and the enthusiastic way in which they take part in lessons and clubs. Pupils show good concentration especially when working on practical activities in mathematics, art and history. Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well. They work hard most of the time, although they do not always work quickly enough when writing.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils contribute exceptionally well to the community by helping others and taking part in local events. They carry out a very wide range of tasks around school very conscientiously. The well-organised school council is very impressive in the way that it gives the pupils a voice and opportunities to improve the school. For example, councillors have played a major role in purchasing play equipment. Pupils show very good concern for the needs of others. They organise their own fund raising events and support charities in the United Kingdom and overseas.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They identify potential dangers, meet with governors to discuss health and safety issues and hold regular discussions with the village police officer about school security. Pupils take frequent exercise and grow their own healthy food in the school garden. Many pupils practise skipping at playtimes, with even the youngest showing good skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers and pupils get on very well together and this ensures that there is a happy working atmosphere. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and use resources imaginatively to hold their attention. There is usually a good pace to learning, although occasionally teachers expect pupils to sit listening for too long at the start of lessons. Skilled teaching assistants support pupils well, often working closely with those with learning difficulties. Teachers give clear explanations to help pupils understand what to do and they make learning fun by planning many exciting practical activities. For example, pupils speak very enthusiastically about a recent 'Structures' workshop when they built shelters that would stand up to a hurricane or made a model Olympic stadium. Teachers pitch work at the right level for most pupils. They mark pupils' works frequently, often giving clear guidance on how pupils can improve in mathematics and English. However, teachers do not always do enough to ensure that pupils write quickly and accurately, and in science, there is not always enough challenge, especially for the more able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, helping them to enjoy school very much. Teachers are successful in linking topics such as art, history and design and technology to make learning purposeful. They foster creativity very imaginatively through visits and visitors. For example, older pupils produce good quality artwork following a recent visit to an art gallery. Leaders regularly review the curriculum. The lack of opportunities for pupils to

practise and develop their writing skills across a range of subjects has been recognised, and leaders are working together well to address this.

The school provides a good range of clubs and other activities that support pupils' personal development extremely well. There are many sporting activities and pupils compete successfully against other schools. As one pupil rightly said, 'Even though it is a small school, we don't miss out on anything.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils say that they feel very safe in this happy and welcoming school. As one pupil commented, 'When you start school everyone helps you to settle quickly and the teachers are very kind.' The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Pupils say that they know what to do if they have a worry and are right to be confident that members of staff will deal with any concerns quickly.

Thorough assessment procedures in English and mathematics provide teachers with good information about how well pupils are doing. Pupils have clear targets to aim for and they talk knowledgeably about what they need to do to improve their work. Assessment arrangements in other subjects are less well established. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and are given good support to ensure that they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and subject leaders are committed to increasing pupils' progress and have a shared understanding of what they should do next. The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory, although some evaluations are slightly overgenerous. The headteacher is very well organised and has managed the staffing changes well so that any adverse impact on pupils has been minimal. Leaders use the new system for tracking pupils' progress to identify groups of pupils needing additional support and to provide intervention as needed. Subject leaders recognise that their involvement in monitoring the impact of strategies on increasing pupils' progress is not rigorous enough. The school's contribution towards community cohesion is good. Leaders provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about life in multicultural Britain.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are becoming more proactive in holding the school to account for its actions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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	3

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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	1
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	1
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

20 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trefonen Church of England Primary School, Oswestry SY10 9DY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some points about your school.

- You make satisfactory progress during your time at school.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress.
- You behave well and enjoy school very much.
- You take responsibility very well. The school council is doing a good job in helping to make the school even better and the 'Energy Busters' and 'Safer School' monitors do a good job.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to make learning fun by giving you interesting things to do. The work on different structures sounded good fun.
- You study a good range of topics, and benefit from interesting visits, visitors and clubs. It is great that you grow your own food.
- The adults in the school care for you well and help you when you are finding your work hard.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know how to make your school even better.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Give you more opportunities to write quickly and without making mistakes.
- Make sure that the work you do in science is just right for each of you.
- Help teachers who look after subjects to check that you are all learning equally well.

What you can do to help your teachers.

- Make sure that you write more quickly without making careless mistakes.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector