

Tadworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125296
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328332
Inspection date	20 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	389
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	Mr Nigel Warwick
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Constable
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Heathcote Tadworth KT20 5RR
Telephone number	01737 354 541
Fax number	01737 373 820

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and investigated the following issues.

- How well children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage especially in developing their social, emotional, reading and writing skills.
- How well pupils make progress from Year 3 to Year 6, especially in their writing and mathematics work.
- How well do pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve?
- How accurate is the leaders' self-evaluation of the work of the school?

The inspectors gained evidence from lessons and from the school's own evaluations of its work. Discussions were held with staff, pupils and two governors. A range of documentation was evaluated. Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised, and the views of parents were gathered from questionnaires. 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

Tadworth Primary School is a foundation school. This means that it is part of a confederation of 13 schools with which it works closely and amongst which some funding is shared. The school is larger than average. Generally, few pupils receive free school meals. Since the last inspection, the school now takes pupils from a much wider area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has also increased. While the proportion with specific difficulties is average overall, some year groups have very high proportions. Pupils' difficulties often relate to general learning and/or behavioural and social problems.

At the end of Year 2, a high proportion of pupils leave to join other local schools in the independent sector. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at unexpected times, especially between Years 3 and 6, has increased in the last three years. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few come from mixed, Asian or Black African cultural heritages. Only a few pupils do not speak English as their first language. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage, which children join in the Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tadworth is a good and inclusive school. Pupils develop wide-ranging skills and enjoy learning. The school motto of being 'ready, willing and able to meet the challenges of the future' is met well. The school is successful because leadership is good and pupils benefit from good teaching and learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and make learning fun. Pupils like school. As one parent noted - and inspectors agree - 'Tadworth is a friendly school, focused on getting the best from every child'.

The headteacher is caring and keen for pupils to do well; she is ably supported by her deputy and senior staff. Together, they have greatly improved systems to check pupils' progress, and this ensures that those who have made slower progress are quickly identified and given extra support. This, together with good teaching and learning, enables pupils to achieve well whatever their background, need or ability.

All leaders work together well and take an active role in planning school improvements. A thorough review of the way that governors work was conducted in 2008. As a result, there is a very clear focus on standards and on pupils' personal development. Governors have close links with classes, and take responsibility for specific subjects or aspects of school life. These changes contribute to governors' good evaluation of the work of the school and its plans.

By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and, from pupils' average starting points, this shows good progress. Good progress continues in Key Stage 2. However, the high proportion of pupils joining or leaving in Years 3 to 6, coupled with the large number of pupils with significant learning difficulties in some years, means that some year groups have significantly lower starting points. As a result, by Year 6, standards are average. Nevertheless, this represents a good level of achievement, and the most-able pupils do well and reach high levels.

Pupils' success and very good progress in reading is a result of having a very clear focus in recent years on developing this. Reading skills, such as letters and sounds (phonics) develop quickly and set pupils up well for reading more complex words. This is then built upon well, with pupils reading very regularly as part of their literacy work and when learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 were totally absorbed in their guided reading session as they found out about fashion and general life, and researched whether certain 'facts' about the Tudor explorers were true or false.

Teachers have been working to develop pupils' mathematics skills. The impact of this is coming through the school. The school is successfully helping pupils to understand and apply their mathematical knowledge when doing real-life practical investigations; there is still room for more of this. A firm emphasis has been placed on improving multiplication, division, and pupils' understanding of place value, and these initiatives are successful.

There has been a strong focus on helping pupils to write about interesting and meaningful subjects. The visit by a famous author and some inspiring teaching, as evident in one Year 5 lesson, when pupils wrote about cruel characters, are aiding pupils' enthusiasm most successfully. As governors said, 'Children are fired by the theme weeks,' and pupils agree that they like them. Examples of writing, such as 'The Enormous Crocodile' in Year 1, 'The Three Polar Bears Gruff' in Year 2, and writing about 'The House' in Year 6, show how pupils keenly write longer pieces of work. Sometimes, when marking work, teachers give good clear tips about how pupils might improve their skills. But, in practice, not enough time is allocated to allow pupils to follow up

these comments so that they can edit and improve their work. This is an important factor in helping more pupils reach the highest-level skills.

The school offers a rich curriculum, and this contributes much to pupils' good cultural awareness. For example, pupils learn French, German and Latin, and they have a good understanding of the wider world and different faiths. These factors enhance community cohesion successfully. There is a good emphasis on helping pupils to enjoy music. Pupils develop their fitness and understanding of how to be healthy in an outstanding way. For example, the school encourages hobbies such as energetic dancing. Staff went out of their way to find an allotment for one pupil who had developed a real keenness for gardening.

Pupils help each other and do much for the wider community. Almost all pupils behave very well, although a few, especially those with more complex needs, sometimes find it more difficult to behave well. A few parents noted concerns about behaviour. The school acknowledges that there have been problems, which are due to staffing difficulties and a lack of rigour and consistency in the school's procedures for managing behaviour. These difficulties have been resolved. The headteacher has worked closely with parents, and additional support has been provided for pupils. Staff have put a rigorous behaviour policy and support programme in place, and these features are working well. Exclusions have fallen rapidly.

The good links with other schools and other organisations enhance the good care. For example, the school now has a home/school liaison worker, funded through the local confederation. This initiative aids communication and support for parents and families, and contributes much to the care for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those with behaviour problems.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As a result of good leadership, standards are improving. Until September 2008, children left the Reception class with the skills that were expected in most aspects of their work, but in reading and writing they were not high enough. The new leader took over in September 2008, and the impact of good leadership is very evident in the high standards predicted for the end of this school year in all areas of children's learning. Children's achievement is now good, and is aided by taking all children into the Reception class in the autumn term, rather than at three points throughout the year. Children benefit from being in an outstandingly caring environment, and adults respect each child as an individual.

Teaching and learning are consistently good. This means that children quickly develop a wide range of new skills. As one parent commented, 'My daughter's teacher has overwhelming enthusiasm and skill', while another noted the dedication of staff. Children behave well, socialise with others, and show a keen interest in all that they do. They chat confidently and read and write with enthusiasm, as evident in their jungle themes activities. Children enjoy the activities, which are well organised to allow for learning both inside and outside the classroom. Leaders want to make the provision outstanding. In their drive to achieve this, they recognise that children need greater independence, especially when selecting resources, and that role play could be made more exciting, especially by widening opportunities for dressing up.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help pupils to regularly edit and improve their writing, so that more learn how to reach higher-level skills.

- Build on the work already started in mathematics, so that pupils do more real-life problem-solving activities.

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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?	1
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	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

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	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

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	2
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**

08 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tadworth Primary School, Tadworth, KT20 5RR

You may remember that two inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly. I am writing to let you know what we found out.

You go to a good school. This means that many things are fine for you, and there are only a few things that need improving. You like your teachers, and you are well cared for. Your teachers work hard to help you to learn new things well, and we are especially pleased that you do so many different and interesting activities. We know that you like school, and almost all of you behave very well. A few of you are not quite so good at this, but you are getting better. If you are one of those people, please try as hard as you can to behave really well. We are especially impressed by your interest and progress in reading. We are also very pleased to find that you enjoy writing. Some of your work is very interesting. Well done for doing so many things for your community. Your headteacher and all of the other adults are working hard to make the school even better for you. I have asked them to:

- give you more time and help to check and improve your written work; this will help you to make it even better
- help you to use your mathematical skills to solve everyday and real-life problems.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Simmons

Lead Inspector