

Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106777
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	336738
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip Beavers, JP
Headteacher	Mrs J Boaler
Date of previous school inspection	9 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and local authority staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's safeguarding documents and policies, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and documents relating to monitoring and evaluation. Eighty-three questionnaires completed and returned by parents and carers were analysed. The inspection team also received and analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by more-able pupils and all pupils in science and writing
- the extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community and develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being
- whether teachers' marking and strategies introduced to promote pupils' assessment of their own learning help pupils improve their work
- whether more-able pupils are given a sufficient level of challenge in lessons
- whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early enough and given effective support.

Information about the school

The school is broadly average in size. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils are at the early stage of learning to speak English. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school in Key Stage 2 has increased since the last inspection.

The school has received the Activemark, the Basic Skills and Healthy Schools awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school, with a number of significant strengths. It is very popular with parents and carers, who typically refer to the school's very caring ethos where pupils are 'encouraged to take responsibility' and 'learn to respect and care for each other'. In this nurturing environment pupils feel very safe and secure and this underpins their excellent behaviour. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. They carry out roles in school with great maturity; readily helping younger pupils at lunchtime and taking the lead on recycling, for example. Pupils are also actively involved in the local community, enjoy a very strong partnership with the Church and enthusiastically promote community events, such as the Duck Race.

All groups of pupils make at least satisfactory progress, relative to their starting points. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6; however, not all pupils reach the levels they are capable of. This is because the pace of lessons is not always fast enough to sustain the best progress and learning activities sometimes lack challenge and are not always adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils well enough. This has particular impact on the attainment of some of the more-able pupils. The school has worked hard to develop an attractive outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is aware of the need to use it to consolidate and extend children's learning across the curriculum.

Through careful self-evaluation the school is aware of its strengths and is clearly focused on appropriate areas for development. The school has undergone a period of change since the last inspection and many members of staff are developing new roles and responsibilities. This has made it difficult to embed all new initiatives fully. However, there has been enough improvement in key areas to confirm the school's satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Pupils' behaviour has improved, as has the quality of marking. Attainment in reading and mathematics has risen, following a dip in performance, and the provision in science and English has been enhanced.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress made by all groups of pupils by ensuring that:
 - the pace of lessons is always brisk enough to sustain the best progress
 - the work provided is accurately matched to every pupil's needs
 - more-able pupils are consistently challenged.
- Ensure that the outdoor environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is used effectively to help all pupils consolidate and extend their learning across the

curriculum.

- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy their time at school. Very positive relationships with staff create a warm, calm environment in the classrooms. Pupils feel they really matter. A group of pupils agreed, 'The teachers do not think of anything before us!'. As a result, pupils work hard in lessons, show they are keen to learn and behave exceptionally well. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make sound progress relative to their broadly average starting points. They make the best progress in mathematics and reading, because of the well organised curriculum. Attainment in science and writing at the end of Key Stage 2 has declined since the last inspection and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in national tests and assessments has fallen to below average. This is partly a result of the differing starting points of pupils joining and leaving the Year 6 classes over the last two years, but also because learning activities in many classes are not always challenging enough. School leadership is keenly focused on raising attainment and inspection findings confirm that pupils in some classes are beginning to make faster progress in science and writing.

Other key features of pupil outcomes are as follows.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and outstanding practice. Pupils make the best progress where accurate assessments link learning activities to the ability of pupils and learning gets off to a cracking pace. In such lessons teachers skilfully question pupils and get them thinking hard. In satisfactory lessons the activities set do not always fully match the ability range in the class. This is because assessments are not used as effectively as they could be. In too many lessons there is a lack of challenge, for more-able pupils in particular. Lesson introductions are too long and pupils are given too much time to complete activities, so their pace of learning slows.

The school has revised the curriculum to make more meaningful links between subject areas. It is rightly focusing on improving the curriculum to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in science and improve the quality and content of pupils' written work. There is a greater emphasis on scientific investigations and science activities are linked to learning in other subjects. For example, a recent topic on the Victorians involved pupils considering how the Victorians cleaned their teeth. Likewise, in English the school has raised attainment in reading and increasingly focuses learning around a class novel to improve pupils' writing. In addition, pupils are now more involved in assessing how well they are doing and considering how they can improve their work for themselves. Although some pupils are making faster progress, it is too soon to see the full impact of these measures with regards to raised attainment overall. The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities underpin pupils' strengths in personal development and enhance their levels of enjoyment. Pupils greatly enjoy salsa dancing and handbell ringing, for example, as well as philosophy and French.

The school takes great care of its pupils. Pastoral guidance is good because staff know and understand individual pupils well. The needs of more vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early. Clearly targeted support for such pupils helps them grow in confidence and so they are able to do as well as others in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3

The effectiveness of care, guidance and support**2****How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is well regarded by parents and carers, staff and pupils alike. The school regularly asks parents and carers for their views and their responses in the questionnaire confirm an effective liaison and very positive partnership with them. The school leadership team has been recently restructured and is clearly focused on driving school improvement and addressing areas of weakness, such as accelerating progress in science and improving the quality and content of pupils' writing. Systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress have become more rigorous since the last inspection; however, procedures to monitor the quality of teaching are not quite so robust and this has led to some inconsistencies in provision. Governors are very committed, well organised and are directly involved in setting priorities for improvement. They are increasingly becoming involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school.

The school works hard to improve pupils' life chances and to tackle discrimination.

Systems are in place to ensure that all groups of pupils have equal opportunity to participate in all school activities. In addition, the school has ensured that all procedures to safeguard pupils are in place and meet current requirements.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is a cohesive community and pupils enjoy strong links with the local community. The school is currently seeking to develop pupils' understanding of other communities, faiths and cultures beyond the immediate locality.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a sound start to their learning in The Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter school with skills typical for their age and most children reach the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Children settle well and develop positive relationships with the caring staff team, which keeps them safe and secure and helps them to cooperate well with others in the classroom. They make the best progress when they have the opportunity to explore activities for themselves. Such activities get children thinking and so they become absorbed in their learning and stay engaged for extended periods of time. For example, younger children had great fun developing their own 'Little Red Riding Hood' stories in the role play area and listening to their own recorded versions of the story. However, not all activities are so well matched to children's needs. Activities are on occasion too hard or too easy and so the pace of learning and rate of progress slows. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is in a stage of transition. The outdoor learning area is currently being enhanced. Many children enjoy the time spent outdoors; however, the environment it is not always used effectively by all groups of pupils to consolidate and extend their learning across the curriculum.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said they were happy with their children's experience at school. Parents and carers feel strongly that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps children safe. Although parents and carers agree that children make enough progress, several parents and carers commented that they thought their children could be stretched further in their learning. Many parents and carers praised the strong leadership provided by the headteacher and commented that the staff are very caring and approachable. Inspectors agree with these comments.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	65	26	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	73	20	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	49	40	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	55	33	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	58	32	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	54	32	39	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	54	35	42	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	39	41	49	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	53	34	41	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	40	40	48	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	39	44	53	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	63	27	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	65	26	31	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



09 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School,
Doncaster, DN11 9LZ

On behalf of the other inspectors and myself, thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we inspected your school recently. You told us how much you enjoy your activities at school, such as handbell ringing and salsa dancing. You should be very proud of the way you behave, because your behaviour is excellent. We were particularly impressed with how sensible you are when you carry out roles of responsibility at school. The lunchtime helpers look after the younger children very well indeed and the members of the school council work very hard to make your school even better. We know you appreciate the strong partnership you have with the Church and really enjoy getting involved in activities in Tickhill. The Duck Race sounds like great fun!

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. You reach the standards that are expected for your age at the end of Year 6. Adults look after you very well so you feel safe and comfortable about asking them for help.

To make your school even better we have asked all the staff to do the following.

- Help you make better progress, by making sure you learn at a fast pace and you are doing work at just the right level.
- Give you some more really challenging activities to do where you really have to think hard, and help those of you who are capable of reaching even higher standards to do so.
- Make sure that the children in the Nursery and the Reception class have a lot of opportunities to use the outdoor areas to help them learn.

Keep working hard and enjoying your school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Fiona Gowers

Lead Inspector

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