

Tylers Green First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110255
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337457
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Sutherland-Harper

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Coleman
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Styles
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, data on progress, monitoring reports, policies, safeguarding information, planning and 71 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- how well planning and target setting are developed across the school
- how effectively the school has developed cross-curricular opportunities for creative learning and cultural development
- the progress the school has made with development of remaining aspects of community cohesion
- the development of independent learning across the school
- the impact of middle managers across the school.

Information about the school

This is a two-form entry infant school situated in a large village. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in two Reception registration groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. These include moderate difficulties; no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small minority from a range of other ethnic groups. The school is well established and popular and has a very good reputation within the local and wider community. The school has National Healthy School Status and the Activemark and is in the process of applying for the silver Artsmark.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and improving school. Attainment is high due to the school's high aspirations and the good individual care it gives to pupils. The school is effectively developing the learning environment and curriculum for Years 1 and 2. This follows the successful creation of a vibrant Early Years Foundation Stage Unit with rooms dedicated to each area of learning. There is a strong sense of community in the school. A beautiful woodland area is well used as an outside classroom. Parents are very supportive. As one parent said, 'I feel I am always able to approach and speak to staff about my child and that they understand my child's needs'. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are especially enthused when they link various aspects of their learning, such as art and writing.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, because provision is good. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good and sometimes excellent progress regardless of their backgrounds so that by the time they leave Year 2 their attainment is high. Over several years high standards have been achieved as a result of more detailed lesson planning and enhanced by more focused target setting.

Attainment and progress in reading are especially strong. Writing skills in some classes have been effectively developed through innovative links with art and with information and communication technology, as shown by good work on poems about winter in Year 2. However, progress in writing sometimes slows because key subject-specific vocabulary is not always used. In the most imaginative lessons there are many opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. Nevertheless, in some lessons, insufficient emphasis is placed on planning to meet the different learning needs of learners, and as a result opportunities for independent learning are sometimes missed. Support staff are often, but not always, used well to support learning needs.

The school ensures that children know how to be healthy. The school council effectively influences school policy, for example developing a vegetable garden as well as assisting in a project to replace vandalised trees. The school is successfully developing plans for community cohesion through closer links with other schools and further embedding links abroad.

Good teaching and a well-orchestrated curriculum ensure that pupils make good progress. Planning provides pupils with chances to be both creative and independent. However, activities are not always accurately matched to the learning needs of some pupils, especially the least able. Pupils know their targets but are not always told clearly how to reach them.

Good leadership from the headteacher, staff teamwork and a shared vision lead to a clear sense of direction for the school. Middle managers are successfully involved in

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planning at all levels and are moving the school forward. As a result of good self-evaluation, the school has good capacity for improvement.

Good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are supported to achieve well and to feel secure. The very large majority of parents feel that the school provides well for their children. Pupils are well prepared for their next school and future lives.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make good or better progress in all lessons by:
 - checking that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are given activities that are accurately matched to their individual needs, especially with a view to developing their writing skills
 - incorporating subject-specific vocabulary and identifying how support staff are to be used in lesson planning
 - ensuring that when teachers assess pupils' work, they show precisely what pupils need to do to improve and reach their targets
 - sharing best practice in assessment and target setting across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy school and are always ready to talk about their work and how they are trying to improve. In lessons, they work well together in ability groupings and when given independent learning tasks. They are often ready to explain the thinking skills behind the method they have chosen. However, some pupils require clearer direction from staff when they begin tasks so that they understand targets and how to achieve them. Pupils work hard to do as well as each other and are keen to respond to some very innovative questioning. All pupils were keen to participate when one teacher pretended he had forgotten key ideas and needed someone to explain them to him. Attainment is high in all areas by the time the pupils leave the school. Boys and girls make the same progress. The best lessons are characterised by well-timed and creative activities which make pupils reflect on how they could then take their own learning forward. This was evident, for example, when they used creative drawings to bring to life their understanding of 'Mr Winter' from a poem being studied in a literacy lesson. Pupils feel that the school is a safe place to be because they are well looked after and look after each other. Behaviour is good. In lessons pupils listen respectfully to each other and are confident that any issues that arise will be dealt with promptly and efficiently. They are clear that there is always someone they could talk to if they had concerns. Pupils think highly of the worry box and friendship bench as ways to help themselves and others. Healthy lifestyles are promoted by a wide range of activities, including judo and country dancing, and a clear understanding of how to stay healthy. Pupils are keen to participate in their school and to take their efforts into the local community. This helps to ensure good attendance and punctuality. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in engaging lesson activities and

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displays around the school which encourage pupils to enhance their thinking.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching leads to good and sometimes outstanding progress in most lessons. Lessons are well organised and modern technology is very effectively used to provide additional resources for learning and to engage pupils. As a result, pupils are very keen to incorporate visual elements in their presentation of work and to get on with their work. Occasionally, teachers talk too much and this limits opportunities for pupils to engage with their learning. Positive relationships are enhanced by recognition of the efforts pupils make through oral feedback. Teachers have a clear idea of pupils' attainment as a result of the tracking systems which have been developed throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and believe that their pupils can reach for the very top. In this, they are supported by the generally effective support from teaching assistants. Class targets are high and pupils strive to better themselves as a group in response to their targets. In a Reception class, children were all engaged because a variety of opportunities were made available for them to make decisions about the

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

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choices in front of them. However, teachers do not always provide clear enough guidance for some individual and lower-ability pupils which will show them most effectively how to improve their work in order to reach targets.

The curriculum has been organised to provide opportunities to engage learners, in part through the work of curriculum development groups which bring together middle managers and all staff in an ongoing dialogue. This dialogue is appreciated by staff as a means of learning from each other about how to take learning forward. The school takes care to develop skills that will enable pupils to engage more fully with the curriculum. For example, there is extra work with a teaching assistant on writing practice in Year 1 which enables pupils to concentrate on letter formation and does so by relating it to stories which interest them, such as 'Santa's Sleigh Ride'. The use of mind maps and imagining the response of those involved brought the 'Great Fire of London' to life. Information and communication technology is used effectively to further pupil skills. The school works very closely with its neighbouring community to provide facilities and with the middle school to ease transition. Termly curriculum weeks, such as the recent focus on art, allow pupils to enhance particular skills and follow up interests, for example in the Christmas Nativity play.

The school has good systems to keep pupils safe. Displays and assemblies promote care and support pupils' independence. The school places great emphasis on the importance of the individual pupil, which makes them feel valued. Teachers manage behaviour well. In an assembly during the inspection, the headteacher used the worry box to emphasise its use and to consider with pupils how they could be safest, healthiest and best-behaved. Good links with other agencies and schools support the work of the school. Dialogue with pre-school providers and the neighbouring middle school enhances good transition arrangements and helps to build on earlier learning. Great care is taken to involve parents and carers in their children's learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's clear vision of her learning community has been strengthened by the sense of purpose which has resulted from the sharing of plans with staff, parents and governors and the resulting sense of pride and ownership in developments, such as the new Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. She is working with staff now to provide more regular opportunities for pupils' creative and independent learning which will take

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forward the plans for the development of Years 1 and 2. Aspiration and high expectations from leaders at all levels have ensured that high attainment has been maintained year-on-year. In a number of classes these expectations, together with engaging independent work, are taking improvement forward.

Leaders at all levels take increasingly effective steps to drive up the quality of teaching and work together successfully to become more systematic in their approach to target setting. The range of skills used in the very best lessons now provides an example of best practice for the rest of the school. All staff have opportunities to develop management skills as they work together with middle managers on the curriculum development teams which are effectively harnessing individual staff skills. The school works actively to provide equality of opportunity for all staff and pupils, which contributes to a very harmonious school community.

Governors bring a variety of experience to their roles and are keen to support the school as fully as possible. The chair focuses on the best fit of these skills to particular areas of the school. Governors are rigorous in ensuring that staff and pupils are safe. All pupils have equal opportunities to access resources and to attempt activities and their progress is being more closely tracked as systems develop. The school has worked hard to promote community cohesion, beginning with the sense of its own community and it is now reaching out to develop pupils' understanding of the wider national and international communities. The school explores and celebrates a range of cultural and religious celebrations in the course of the year.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

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When children join the school, their attainment on entry is broadly in line with expectations for their age, but there are noted weaknesses in communication, language and literacy, and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children leave with levels of attainment above average. Reorganisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit last year has reinforced the skills of the whole team and developed confidence and independence in happy learners who are taking an increasingly dynamic role in their own learning. Since the reorganisation, opportunities for more active learning have greatly increased with the improved provision through rooms dedicated to individual areas of learning. Boys and girls are equally engaged and both groups make good progress. Expectations are made very clear and there is constant and successful emphasis on developing children's potential to the full. Children fully understand how to stay safe and healthy. Pre-school groups are effectively involved to ensure a smooth transition into the school. Leadership and management are good. Leaders have thoroughly evaluated practice to improve provision and understand how to use existing skills well while planning for ongoing improvements. Good use is made of findings from data and assessments to secure further improvement for children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. They appreciate the approachable and helpful staff and feel that their children really enjoy being at the school because their needs are understood. They also appreciate the way the school makes efforts to be an integral part of its local community, which in turn generates a lot of support for the school, enabling it to maintain excellent standards.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tylers Green First 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 inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	80	14	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	82	13	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	49	31	44	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	58	27	38	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	72	19	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	59	27	38	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	61	27	38	0	0	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)	34	48	28	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	51	32	45	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	49	31	44	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	34	37	52	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	40	56	28	39	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	68	21	30	2	3	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.



11 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tylers Green First School, Penn, High Wycombe HP10 8EF

I am writing to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you, having a chance to attend your Christmas pantomime and seeing the progress you make in lessons. Your school is a good school and getting better because your teachers are working together to make sure that they link your interests with the subjects they are teaching.

These are the things we particularly liked about your school:

- you care about your school and try to look after each other
- you have close links with your local community, which means that you are constantly thinking about what you can do to make it even better
- you enjoy linking ideas in your lessons, such as using art to help with writing and information and communication technology to help with history
- your headteacher and the staff have worked hard to make your Early Years Foundation Stage Unit an attractive and fun place.

In order for your school to become even better, we have asked the teachers to make sure that you know precisely how to improve your work so that you can most easily reach all your targets. We have asked them to share the things they do best across the school and to match the activities you do to your particular needs in each class.

It was a pleasure to see how many cards you had posted for each other in your Christmas post box and to see some exciting stories about 'Santa's Sleigh'. The other inspectors and I hope you have a very happy Christmas and send you our best wishes for success in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Lead Inspector

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