

Temple Hill Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118571
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339246
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	502
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Jarvis
Headteacher	Yvonne Hunter
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 parts of lessons or activities and held meetings with governors and staff, spoke by telephone to the school's improvement adviser and met with groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation such as raising attainment plan, school policies, evidence from advisory visits, past records of governors' meetings and analysed 94 questionnaires from parents, 88 from pupils and 29 from staff.

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

- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make progress in their areas of learning, particularly language, communication and number
- the pupils' current levels of attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science through the school
- how teachers use assessment information to accelerate pupils' learning in key subjects and how well they teach
- how well senior leaders, including governors, are addressing weaknesses in the school and are developing the school's long-term capacity to improve.

Information about the school

Temple Hill is much bigger than the average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. A small but growing number of pupils from minority ethnic groups have joined the school most of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than normally found, and includes pupils with academic, social, emotional, physical impairments and behavioural difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage has children taught in a Nursery and three Reception classes. There are 74 children who attend part-time.

Following the retirement of the previous headteacher an advisory headteacher was appointed by the local authority, in consultation with the governors, to lead the school from April 2009. The governors have made several unsuccessful attempts to appoint a permanent headteacher and are now hoping to appoint for September 2010.

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?**4****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science.

The school has undergone a number of recent changes, including a change of leadership, but these have not deflected the school from ensuring that it promotes pupils' good behaviour and good quality care. The school 'goes the extra mile' to support families in need and pupils and their parents can access direct help from staff and a counselling service provided within the school to help them through difficult times. Parents commented favourably in these particular areas; as one said, 'The school really gave my child and me support in a sensitive way during a difficult period.' Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of the good provision for them.

Children join the school with skills and understanding that are generally below the expectations for their ages. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make up some ground in their learning and development, particularly in their physical and social skills. They enjoy working independently, but not all teaching stretches their natural curiosity to learn.

Pupils make insufficient progress from Year 1 through to Year 6. Consequently, the attainment of Year 6 pupils is well below national averages in English, mathematics and science. This has been the case for the last four years. The school is focusing on accelerating pupils' rate of learning. As a result, some standards are improving and individual pupils and classes are making better progress. However, this improvement has not yet had time to become fully established and consolidated enough to ensure that the gap is closing between the school's and national standards or to improve quickly pupils' achievement over time.

Pupils listen and behave well in lessons and there is little disruption. Teachers plan activities with an increasing emphasis upon making them fun, but too many lessons fail to make learning consistently exciting. Staff now check on pupils' progress more carefully, which is giving teachers a clearer picture of where there are gaps in learning. However not all teachers' marking is good enough to help pupils to improve. The recently revised curriculum is helping staff link subjects and learning, although not all activities are planned to make learning more practical, relevant or open-ended enough

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to extend pupils' learning. Pupils' basic skills, which are taught regularly within the subject-specific lessons, are not always planned well enough in other subjects to help pupils consolidate or improve their learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) activities include a variety of activities to stretch pupils' thinking, aided by a purpose-built computer suite. Pupils have good local knowledge and are involved well in their community. Their awareness of the lives of others from different communities here in Great Britain or world wide is more limited.

The advisory headteacher is providing clear direction and support. Whole-school priorities to improve pupils' attainment have been correctly identified. The monitoring of lessons, however, while systematic, does not always identify exactly which aspects of pupils' learning should be improved quickly. Governors give sound support, although many are new and are getting to grips with their roles in acting as 'critical friends'. Some positive improvements made in a relatively short time demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - ensuring that plans to focus upon improving writing from January 2010 are implemented
 - giving pupils more realistic and relevant problem-solving and investigative activities in their mathematical and science-based work
- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching to the level of the best by:
 - ensuring that lessons really motivate pupils' and engage their interest through activities being better matched to pupils' needs
 - teaching more lessons at a brisk pace so pupils cover more ground in their learning
 - ensuring that the good quality marking found in some classes is a feature found in all classes to help pupils to improve their work
 - ensuring children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have more prompts from adults when working independently to extend their learning.
- Enhance the quality of the curriculum in the coming school year by:
 - ensuring children in the Nursery and Reception classes have more challenging open-ended activities
 - planning for greater use of key skills within other subjects to help pupils use and develop them more regularly
 - extending the range of opportunities for pupils to learn about those who live much further away from the school in other countries or localities.

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The amount of progress pupils make in lessons is improving, particularly since the start of this term but it is inadequate overall. Pupils are not as well prepared as they might be for their next schools and beyond. There are nevertheless high points in pupils' learning such as when pupils stretched their thinking and language skills when discovering more about the life of Henry VIII. However, such high points are outweighed by too many lessons where pupils make only satisfactory or, in some cases, inadequate progress. For example, low challenge and the slow pace of work in an English lesson about writing instructions meant pupils' progress was limited. Although there are strengths which contribute to pupils' achievement, such as their positive attitudes and sense of safety, achievement is inadequate overall.

As a result of recent improvements to assessment routines generally and good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, these pupils make satisfactory progress. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates and, on occasions, it is sometimes better.

Pupils respond well to their teachers and to each other because of the good levels of care they receive, supported by good social and moral guidance. They enjoy being at this school. One view reflected many others when a pupil said, 'If I had a choice I would stay at Temple.' Although the vast majority say they feel safe, a small minority voiced concerns about other pupils' behaviour on occasions. Pupils contribute to the smooth running of the school by being buddies, playground friends and peer mediators. The school council is involved well in initiatives such as anti-bullying week and by leading on charity fund raising such as 'Children in Need' and in helping to influence the local council's decisions about a local play park. Pupils say they enjoy visiting the local church, community centre and are looking forward to performing at a major local shopping centre. Pupils know about healthy eating in general terms, but are not always clear about what is best to eat or how physical activity helps them keep fit. At playtimes activity levels are high for many, but not all.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3

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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The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is typically satisfactory, but is not yet consistently good enough to move pupils' learning on at a brisk pace to make up for past rates of slow progress. That said, good teaching is on the increase. This is as a result of staff making better use of assessment information to judge how well different groups of pupils' make progress and to plan lessons that generally match pupils' needs. Satisfactory teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is helping children make up some ground in their learning; teaching in some aspects is good so that children's listening skills, physical development, dispositions and attitudes are fostered well. Throughout the school, there are examples of better quality teaching where pupils are really enthused by their learning. For example, in one lesson focused on writing, pupils really enjoyed the role play activities. In too many lessons, however, the pace of learning is too slow. Pupils' speaking skills are not always encouraged sufficiently, as some explanations are too long and the aims and purpose behind lesson activities are not clear to pupils. Nearly all staff use audio-visual interactive whiteboards to enliven lessons where possible, although not all use them effectively. ICT is used by pupils to good effect in some classes. Teaching assistants provide timely help when needed and those pupils who are vulnerable are particularly well served. Teachers give verbal and written feedback regularly to pupils, but written comments vary in quality between classes, some give advice on how to improve, others appear too generous.

The school started a different approach to planning activities this term with a view to making learning more fun. Various initiatives such as the 'Mantle of the expert', 'Make a big difference' and 'Making maths count' are starting to improve pupils' language and number skills. These initiatives are comparatively new and are taking time to take full effect. Writing, which is not always planned in sufficient depth within other subjects, is a focus from the spring term. There are strengths in the way other activities help extend the curriculum and widen pupils' horizons. These include a good range of well-attended after-school clubs, including weekly sports coaching from a previous pupil, now a professional footballer.

The school's care, guidance and support are well organised and effective, particularly for

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the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are potentially vulnerable. Various initiatives such as the locally-based 'Time for you', which allows pupils, parents and carers to have one-to-one counselling, is making a real difference. These are helping pupils become more confident and are reducing the few remaining occurrences of inappropriate behaviour. The school takes pupils' safety very seriously and all but a very small minority of pupils say the school succeeds in doing so. Pupils comment favourably on the school's approach to care and one was typical of many, saying 'The school is very good at helping people when they are upset and hurt.'

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 very experienced advisory headteacher has provided stability to the school and challenged the senior staff to recognise what the school needs to do. Foremost is the need to speed up pupils' progress and raise their attainment in basic skills. The desire to improve is now clear and shared. Plans for action include regular checks to identify quickly which pupils are making quicker or slower progress, and provision is adjusted accordingly. Staff are also helping to devise a more engaging curriculum to motivate pupils. These improvements are starting to have an impact. Monitoring of teaching is leading to improvement, but not yet consistently so. This is partly because there has not been a consistent focus on those features of the lesson that result in good learning. The school's improvement partner provides a good sounding board and challenge to the school. The headteacher, supported well by senior leaders and governors, ensures that the school adopts effective safeguarding procedures and has good working partnerships with parents. Staff ensure that all pupils have equal access to after-school clubs, visits, activities and support. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Harmonious race relations are supported through approaches such as the 'language of the term' and by celebrating different religious festivals. The pupils' involvement within the school and in the local community is good. Links with schools much further afield, globally or in contrasting localities however, are not yet developed to the same good level to expand pupils' horizons further.

The governors guide the school satisfactorily despite some recent changes and additions to their number. The relatively new chair of governors, supported by others, has a realistic view of the school's strengths. The governors have rightly retained the services of the advisory headteacher until September 2010, to minimise disruption prior to a

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permanent appointment.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Through the Nursery and Reception, children make satisfactory progress, making up some ground in their learning, particularly in their physical and social abilities. However when they start Year 1, few are meeting age-related expectations in their learning and development. The Nursery provides a welcoming start to school, with children settling very well. Children's welfare is ensured, with those individuals needing emotional support being spotted quickly. The new sensory room, created for the very specific high levels of need for some children, is good addition to provision. In Reception classes, activities are usually organised at the appropriate levels, although some activities tend to occupy children's interests and abilities rather than stretch them fully. For example an activity helping children count to 10 was well conceived, but there was little challenge set within the activity for potentially more able children to see if they could count on further. Activities are consistently planned across the three classes and generally have a good balance of activities between activities for children to choose and those directed by the class teacher. In a well taught start to an activity, children's listening skills developed well with the aid of other adult helpers. The outside area provides extensive opportunities for children to explore, which contributes to children developing well in their physical areas of learning. While they happily use the range of equipment and resources, they are not always guided sufficiently well by staff to extend the potential of activities or to expand their creative abilities, social skills or knowledge of the world. This stage of the school is managed satisfactorily.

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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

The vast majority of the parents who returned the questionnaire indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed with most questions and relatively few strongly disagreed. Out of those that commented, however, concerns outweighed praise. There were three common issues; the lack of progress children make, the behaviour of some pupils, and the uncertainties caused by the lack of a permanent headteacher. Inspectors found that parents' and carers' concerns over pupils' slow progress are largely justified. There are some early signs that this is now being addressed. The behaviour of pupils during the inspection was found to be good, with very little that dropped below this level. The positive comments from parents included praise for the current advisory headteacher's work, and for individual staff. Other individual parents and their children were also very positive about their experience of the school, particularly when going through personal difficulties.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Temple Hill 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 428 full time pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	69	26	28	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	64	31	33	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	53	39	41	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	47	44	47	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	55	36	38	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	49	42	45	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	53	42	45	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)	28	30	46	49	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	39	49	52	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	30	45	48	10	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	34	48	51	4	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	40	43	41	44	6	6	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	62	30	32	6	6	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



4 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Temple Hill Primary and Nursery School, Dartford, DA1 5ND

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we inspected it recently. We appreciate the comments many of you, and your parents, made about your school. I write to let you know what we found.

Although the staff are working hard to make the school better, this is not yet ensuring you make at least the expected levels of progress over Years 1 to 6. Another inspector will visit the school in about six to eight months to see how the school is improving.

Your school ensures that you get good levels of personal support, particularly for those of you who find learning difficult or who are going through particularly tough times. We were impressed by your politeness and good behaviour. It was good to hear from most of you that you feel safe at school and know how to stay safe in different circumstances. The youngest children settle in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly and enjoy their time there. You enjoy the newer and more interesting activities now planned and you said you really enjoy the extra clubs you can attend. Your behaviour is good, although some of your parents and carers feel it could be better still. The school helps you to be active at playtimes, in lessons and after school, but some of you are not so sure which foods are the most healthy to eat.

The standards you reach in English, mathematics and science are not as good as they should be. Teaching has improved since the start of this term, but while it is satisfactory overall, there are still too few good lessons. Some marking makes clear to you how to improve your work, but not all. Your headteacher and staff work hard and know how to improve your school. We have asked the school to speed up your progress and this will help to raise standards. We have also asked that more lessons are good and that further improvements are made to the curriculum.

You can all help to speed up your progress and raise attainment by continuing to behave well and taking advice about how you can improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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