

Toftwood Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 121206 |
| Local Authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 339897 |
| Inspection dates | 8–9 February 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Ruth Frith |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 287 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs June Barnes |
| Headteacher | Mrs Joanna Pedlow |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 March 2007 |
| School address | School Lane Toftwood East Dereham |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent observing learning. Inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 10 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation which included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's development plan and pupils' work. In addition, the responses of 111 parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account.

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

- the use of assessment; how it informs teaching and learning and contributes to improving standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- the improvements made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and what influence these have had on children's learning and development
- what the school has done to improve attendance and punctuality and the impact of this on overall attendance levels.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average infant school with a Nursery that provides a three-hour morning session each weekday. Less than a third of the children in Reception have attended the Nursery. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with other pupils coming from a narrow range of minority ethnic groups. A small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language and a few of these are at the early stages of speaking English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is high. The school has been presented with the School Achievement Award, Sports Activemark and Norfolk Healthy Schools Status.

The privately managed after-school club and holiday club operating in the school are inspected separately.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school where the excellent care for each child lies at the heart of its work. Pupils flourish within this vibrant, friendly and supportive environment in which opportunities and experiences ensure pupils achieve exceptionally well. Typical comments from parents such as, 'My son is thriving at this school and he can't wait to go every morning,' reflect this well. It is clear that pupils, staff, parents and governors thoroughly enjoy being part of the school community.

The school's success stems from the excellent leadership of the headteacher which is clearly focused on promoting pupils' personal development and well-being and raising attainment. She shows outstanding commitment to the pupils, their families and the local community and, together with the deputy headteacher and other staff, is instrumental in maintaining the very strong inclusive ethos. There are particularly good systems for checking how well the school is doing and identifying what it could do better. These reflect the school's consistent drive for improvement. Leaders and managers have exceptionally high aspirations, and the staff's expectations of what pupils can do are high. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and this gives them the confidence to ask questions about standards, and how they could be improved. Recent successful developments and outstanding provision ensure the school has excellent capacity for sustained improvement. Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are outstanding and the school's resources are managed extremely well. Consequently, the school provides excellent value for money.

Recent successful initiatives in teaching, assessment and the curriculum are improving pupils' learning and progress and are now becoming embedded in daily routines. They have already had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Results of the 2009 Year 2 national assessments were the highest for several years with overall attainment significantly above average. There were particular strengths in writing and mathematics. Since the last inspection, there have also been many improvements in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage which have led to exceptionally good learning and progress. Throughout the school, teachers successfully use the information gained from assessing pupils' progress and attainment to plan work that meets the needs and interests of all groups of pupils. Learning moves at a very good pace and pupils respond exceptionally well to the challenges set. The outstanding curriculum makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development and academic achievement. There is a buzz of excitement and activity around the school as pupils set about their work. One of the best features is the way in which pupils develop confidence and the ability to act and work independently. Because activities are very interesting, they thoroughly enjoy what they are doing and behave exceptionally well.

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There is a positive atmosphere throughout the school and pupils are actively encouraged to respect others through learning about a range of different beliefs, religions and lifestyles. This helps to create a supportive and caring school community. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school by taking on roles which develop their feelings of responsibility. Pupils are especially well cared for and supported. They say staff help them to feel safe and live fit and healthy lives. High expectations of the need to start learning promptly each morning, together with support and advice for parents who find it difficult to bring their children to school regularly, have helped to improve attendance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the current initiatives and practices in teaching, assessment and the curriculum are firmly embedded across the school so that pupils' learning, progress and standards continue to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Observations during lessons, an analysis of assessment data and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that they are currently making exceptionally good progress. The introduction of new mathematical resources and intervention programmes to support specific pupils, have helped to raise standards in mathematics. Work which makes a stronger connection between pupils' talking and writing is also proving effective. Staff are continuing to focus on improving reading by extending the range of books available for the youngest pupils, and boys in particular. In the 2009 national assessments, an above-average proportion of pupils gained a Level 3 in all subjects, indicating appropriate challenge for more able pupils. Many pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups attained higher standards than similar pupils nationally as did those with English as an additional language in reading and mathematics.

Pupils develop a keen spiritual awareness through many areas of study and through thinking about themselves and their place within the world. Their cultural education is developed particularly well as they discover ways of life in different countries and reflect sensitively on the suffering of people in Haiti. Pupils learn what is expected of them through their day-to-day interaction with staff and this results in exceptional relationships. Staff show respect for pupils which, in turn, develops pupils' high self-esteem and respect for others. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and eating a range of food. They keep themselves and others safe through their own actions and through, for example, making posters to remind pupils to act calmly around the school. They know their ideas are taken seriously and are keen to suggest ways to improve the school. Pupils develop good personal qualities such as working in groups, taking turns and helping each other, which all contribute very positively to their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is highly effective in ensuring that pupils are well motivated and engaged in their learning. Consequently, pupils quickly discover that learning is fun. Their interest and enjoyment are captured particularly well because teachers use good subject knowledge, and information from accurately assessing pupils' work, to plan exciting lessons which build systematically on previous learning. Very rarely, staff do not take sufficient notice of the range of ability within the Year 2 sets for literacy and mathematics. High-quality target-setting is a key feature of all lessons so pupils are very clear about how to succeed. The expertise of teaching assistants is used very effectively to support pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult. Staff use questioning well to develop pupils' thinking and, at the end of lessons, to assess whether they have understood the key learning points. They make useful comments to encourage pupils' progress during lessons. Teachers make full use of a range of new technology to enhance teaching and learning.

The curriculum is well organised, imaginative and effective in providing memorable experiences. It provides learning opportunities that sustain very effective learning and ensure pupils' well-being. Success in gaining national recognition for sports and healthy schools' status reflects excellent provision which develops pupils' understanding of how to live healthy, active lives. There is a wide range of popular visits, visitors and enrichment activities that capture pupils' interests. Tailored programmes meet the very

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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complex needs of some pupils and ensure that they, too, make particularly good progress from a wide variety of starting points.

Well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils and the excellent relationships evident throughout the school contribute to pupils' outstanding development, well-being and learning. Staff work particularly hard to remove any barriers to learning, and well-targeted support for particular groups and individuals ensures that pupils are able to make the best of all opportunities. The needs of vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and their progress and well-being carefully monitored. Staff work very well with parents and a range of services to ensure pupils' needs are appropriately met. There are very good arrangements to ensure a smooth transfer into and out of school and between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 1 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 1 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

An exceptional lead is given to colleagues who, in turn, work as a strong team sharing the headteacher's sense of purpose and vision for the school. They are fully committed to Toftwood Infant School and staff morale is very high. Staff take on a variety of management responsibilities successfully and their work has a direct impact on school improvement. Leaders are especially effective in using the information from the regular and accurate evaluation of what individual pupils achieve to set challenging targets that ensure outstanding progress. Leaders and managers at all levels take highly effective steps to improve the quality of teaching, maintaining the interests and skills of staff by very effective support and quality training. Staff are encouraged to be innovative and respond well to the challenge.

Staff have a highly positive relationship with parents and carers and help them to support their children's learning. They successfully use a variety of methods to communicate with parents and carers as the following typical comment indicates: 'As a working parent, I find the school's text message service very useful and informative.' Staff provide a wide range of information about teaching and the curriculum, and formally ask for their views and opinions. Excellent partnerships have been developed with the local children's centre and a range of support agencies, which help to ensure the needs of the pupils and their families are met. Staff monitor progress and outcomes very well and develop successful strategies to reduce any possible unevenness between groups of pupils. The school places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the

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centre of its work. Staff are fully aware of the groups of pupils who may be subject to discrimination, and very clear expectations and effective support ensure that the school operates as a harmonious community. The school makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion based on a clear understanding of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and is currently in the process of working to improve the pupils' understanding of national and global communities. Formal procedures to protect pupils and keep them safe are excellent and staff and governors have a comprehensive awareness of all issues. Staff know which pupils are at risk and give priority to ensuring their welfare. Governors make an exceptional contribution to the work and direction of the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Many children enter Nursery and Reception with standards below those frequently seen in children of that age, particularly in speech and language. Children are eager to attend and make significant gains in their learning. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1 most are working securely within the early learning goals across all areas. Particularly good links with pre-school providers and parents and carers help children to settle quickly because procedures and expectations are clear and staff are familiar and welcoming. The children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly impressive. Staff organise a programme of rich, varied and imaginative experiences both in classrooms and outside which are especially successful in developing high levels of independence, curiosity and creativity. Assessment through high-quality observations is rigorous and used particularly well to plan activities that meet the range of children's

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interests, needs and capabilities. Staff frequently involve the children in deciding what to do and work alongside them to plan the next small steps in their learning. There is a particularly good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those that are led by adults. Teaching is firmly rooted in a particularly good understanding of how young children progress and in an expert knowledge of what is required for their learning and development. Children respond well to the expectations of the adults who teach them and relationships are excellent. They demonstrate a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe through their attitudes and behaviour towards others. Good health and well-being are encouraged and children learn good habits such as washing their hands at appropriate times. Very effective leadership and management and comprehensive policies and procedures ensure that children settle quickly, feel safe and are well protected.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that they are happy with their children's experiences of school and that their children enjoy their time at Toftwood Infant School. They believe their children are kept safe, are taught well and learn to live healthily. The headteacher and senior managers have obviously gained the confidence of these parents and carers who think leadership and management of the school are good. A very small minority have concerns about their child's progress, the information they receive about this and the way the school meets their child's needs. However, inspectors found that pupils make exceptional progress due to very effective support and teaching and parents are offered plenty of opportunities to talk about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Toftwood Infant 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 287 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 71 | 64 | 38 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 76 | 68 | 35 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 54 | 49 | 51 | 46 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 61 | 55 | 44 | 40 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 71 | 65 | 37 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 62 | 56 | 44 | 40 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 65 | 59 | 44 | 40 | 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) | 56 | 51 | 48 | 44 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 56 | 51 | 47 | 43 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 55 | 50 | 50 | 45 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 46 | 41 | 58 | 52 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 68 | 62 | 41 | 37 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 71 | 64 | 37 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

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.



10 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Toftwood Infant School, East Dereham, NR19 1LS

You may remember that inspectors recently visited your school to look at lessons and see what you are learning. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We think that Toftwood is an outstanding school and here are some of the things we found out.

You thoroughly enjoy learning because teachers give you lots of interesting things to do and lessons are fun.

You make excellent progress so that by the time you leave at the end of Year 2, you are working at levels higher than those we often see.

Your behaviour and the way you work with each other in lessons is excellent. Well done!

You are also very clever at doing things for yourself and working alone.

All the adults look after you extremely well so you feel safe in school and know who to go to if you have a problem.

You really understand what you need to do to stay fit and healthy and this is influencing what you eat and how you play.

You have a great headteacher who gets lots of help from all the staff and governors. They are always trying to make things better so will ensure that the latest developments in school continue to help your learning and progress. They will do this by looking at the way they teach and check your work and the kind of things they teach you. We know you will help by continuing to do your best.

We wish you all well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Frith

Lead inspector

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