

Trimley St Martin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124614
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340612
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Colin Henderson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Kemp
Headteacher	Mr P Lamb
Date of previous school inspection	8 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent observing learning; 15 lessons were observed; 10 teachers and teaching assistants were seen; and meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school development plan, self-evaluation form and minutes of meetings. Thirty four parent questionnaires, 91 pupil and 15 staff questionnaires were analysed.

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

- attainment in writing and how the leadership team has tried to improve it
- how well teachers use assessments to guide their teaching and help pupils to improve their work
- how well the leadership team and governors have improved the quality teaching and learning
- whether pupils have a good understanding of people's lives in other communities in this country, and around the world.

Information about the school

This smaller than average-sized primary school has provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage for Nursery and Reception aged children. Most pupils come from the local and surrounding villages. They come from a broad range of backgrounds and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost all of the pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Active Sports Mark and bronze Eco Award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Trimley St Martin is a friendly school where pupils enjoy their learning and get on well together. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, although some, particularly the more able, do not always achieve as well as they could. Most parents value the school and are pleased that their children look forward to going and behave well. Pupils feel safe and are confident that they could approach any member of staff if they have a concern, knowing that they would be listened to and appropriate action taken. The occasional unacceptable behaviour of a very small number of pupils is handled well to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning. Parents and pupils value particularly the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school has made some progress since the last inspection, although developments are not always established consistently because of staff changes and the re-organisation of classes due to lower pupil numbers. The quality of teaching, while satisfactory overall, has many good features, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. However, procedures to improve teaching are not rigorous enough to ensure that it is consistently good throughout the school.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected for their age, although many have weaker language and communication skills. Children benefit from good provision and progress well. Pupils' progress throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6, with some yearly variation. Writing remains a weakness with too few pupils attaining above average levels. Although writing skills are taught at least satisfactorily and often well in literacy lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their skills in different subjects or through interesting cross-curricular themes. This limits opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to produce more detailed, longer pieces of writing.

Pupils make good progress in classes where the teacher is using a range of different assessment procedures, for example encouraging pupils to check their own and each others' learning. These recent initiatives are beginning to raise writing attainment as pupils become more confident about what they have to improve and how to achieve it. Some teachers do not use assessment information consistently to provide learning activities that match the full range of abilities. Although pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, activities are not always matched to their specific needs and this limits their progress in some lessons.

The school has established a good partnership with most parents and the headteacher continues to encourage them to help in their children's learning. The headteacher, staff and a supportive governing body have a clear understanding of what they need to

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improve, but procedures are not yet rigorous enough to ensure sustained improvements are made. Regular assessments track pupils' progress each term and are used to set end of year targets. However, these are not always challenging enough to ensure that attainment rises quickly. Pupils' progress towards their targets is not checked rigorously to identify what specifically is needed to ensure better progress. A restructured, more cohesive management team is providing a satisfactory capacity to improve. They are introducing initiatives that are beginning to raise pupils' attainment, for example in writing. Such new practices are not yet sufficiently embedded in practice to drive improvement consistently. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily, although pupils' understanding of life in different communities is less secure.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching by improving evaluation procedures to ensure that teachers have high expectations of all pupils and match activities to their different learning needs.
- Raise the attainment, particularly of more able pupils, by using assessment information more robustly to set challenging, yet realistic improvement targets and rigorously check pupils' progress to ensure they meet them.
- Improve pupils' writing skills by embedding good practice in the use of assessment and improvement targets to help pupils understand how to improve their written work.
- Develop curriculum themes to provide more opportunities for pupils to produce longer, more detailed pieces of writing.
- 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 achieve satisfactorily in lessons. Some achieve well when the teaching is good and pupils are enthusiastically involved in their own learning, for example when Year 5 pupils are asked to work out how many hours they sleep. Pupils' achievement in lessons is not as good where the work is not suited to their learning needs or opportunities are missed to extend their knowledge and understanding, particularly more able pupils.

The school uses assessments to track pupils' progress and identify those who are not achieving as well as they could. Extra support encourages them to achieve better, although this is not always checked carefully enough to ensure that it is successful. Most pupils attain average levels, with some yearly variation, as reflected in the national assessments for Year 2 and Year 6. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. However, too few pupils are attaining above average levels, particularly in writing. Some good support by teachers and teaching assistants is effective in helping pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities but their progress overall towards their learning targets is satisfactory as learning activities are

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not consistently match to their differing needs.

Pupils enjoy their learning and most attend well. They are attentive in lessons and their behaviour is good. Pupils keep fit by participating enthusiastically in physical education lessons and in a good range of sports. They have a good understanding of healthy eating. The school council contributes to improving the school, for example the improved playground equipment has resulted in better lunchtime behaviour. Pupils contribute satisfactorily to the local community, for example through church visits and links with the local farm shop. Their understanding of the world of work is enhanced by their involvement in fund-raising events for charities. Pupils' moral and social development is good. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils enhance their knowledge of different cultures satisfactorily through the curriculum, for example in art.

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	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	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage their classes well to ensure that pupils stay focused on their learning. They plan lessons with clear learning objectives, although these do not consistently

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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match the range of learning needs, especially in mixed ability and mixed age classes. Teachers use questions successfully to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas, although few use more challenging questions to help more able pupils apply their skills and knowledge. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently and use newly developed procedures to help pupils improve their work. Although in the early stages of development, they are beginning to raise standards in some classes, for example in writing in Years 5 and 6.

The curriculum is being developed to increase links between subjects, for example through such themes as the 'Great Fire of London'. Pupils say they enjoy these increased opportunities for writing, especially when they use their research and information and communication technology skills to enhance their learning. The range of learning activities is enhanced significantly by the broad extra-curricular programme. These include a circus skills club and the very successful Young Engineers Club.

Pupils benefit from some good support in classroom activities and through an effective induction process when they join the school and when they move to their next school. The buddy system helps pupils to make friends and feel safe. Procedures to check on and support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not always systematic enough. This does not ensure that they benefit from continuing good care and support and progress consistently.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher successfully encourages staff, governors, pupils and many parents to contribute to establishing a happy and safe school. Working closely with a supportive governing body and an increasingly cohesive leadership team, they have introduced new ideas that are beginning to improve the school's effectiveness. However, these are not sufficiently embedded to raise attainment quickly, for example in writing. The headteacher and key subject staff monitor teaching but do not evaluate carefully enough to target improvement, ensure consistently high teachers' expectations and better pupil achievement. Governors are kept well informed about how the school is doing, although they are not fully involved in checking how it can improve even more. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily but opportunities to extend more able and gifted and talented pupils are not always taken.

The headteacher has used a variety of means, for example curriculum workshops, to

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establish a good partnership with parents. A number of good links with other local schools are used to provide staff training and broader opportunities for pupils. There are some links with other external agencies, although their effectiveness is not evaluated carefully to see how they help pupils to achieve. The school promotes cohesion within its own community successfully. It actively promotes cohesion within the local community, for example by links with churches and other village organisations, although it does not evaluate its effectiveness carefully. There are too few opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of life in a different kind of community.

Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. They provide a safe and secure working environment. Procedures to review and check on the effectiveness of various safeguarding policies are not always diligently followed. Regular training for staff at all levels, for example in first aid and child protection issues, ensures that staff are kept vigilant.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Nursery and Reception year children make good progress because of good teaching, the individual support provided by all staff and the effective use of ongoing assessments. Relationships are good. Staff know the children well, and have a good understanding of their different interests and how they learn. For example, a focus on activities to match boys' interests led to improvements in their learning. Parents are pleased with the way in which their children settle and how they are kept informed and involved. Good leadership and management have maintained a strong focus on checking carefully on how each child is doing. Staff make good use of detailed assessment information to

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ensure that individual needs are met. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. By the time they enter Year 1, attainment is broadly average although there remain weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. Resources are used well to provide a good balance between activities which are led by adults and those that the children choose to do themselves.

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

Most parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school. Many value its friendly approach, which helps their children to feel safe and enjoy school. Most parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and the progress being made by their children. A small number felt their children could do better. Some parents were concerned about the behaviour of a small number of pupils, but most felt that the school had effective procedures for dealing with this. Inspectors confirmed the view of most parents that staff tackled the occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour successfully and minimised any disruption caused. Inspectors judged that pupils make satisfactory progress, although more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trimley St Martin Primary 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 163 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	59	13	38	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	65	11	32	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	53	15	44	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	53	12	35	4	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	50	15	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	53	15	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	41	20	59	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)	13	38	18	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	47	15	44	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	41	18	53	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	50	15	44	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	41	18	53	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	59	13	38	1	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.



Thursday 18 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Trimley St Martin Primary School, Felixstowe, IP11 0QL

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you. After spending two days in your school, talking with you and your teachers, looking at your work and watching you learn, we have judged that your school is satisfactory.

We were pleased to see how well you get on together and you are proud of your school. As your behaviour is good, teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to school councillors about how they contribute to your school community and raise money for charities. You told us that you enjoy your work, especially the interesting clubs like the circus skills and the Young Engineers. You said that you enjoy writing when you are studying such topics as the Great Fire of London. We have asked your teachers to provide you with more interesting opportunities to develop your writing skills. We think that some of you learn well and your teachers are working hard to help you progress as well as possible. We have asked your teachers to help you learn even more effectively by making more of your lessons interesting and challenging, especially for those of you who are good at learning.

You are keen to improve your achievement. For some of you, teachers are starting to use different ways, such as checking your own and each other's work, to suggest ways to improve. We have asked your teachers to provide you with more consistent ways of helping you to know how well you are doing, and how to improve your work. We would encourage you to use these ways and try hard to make your work even better. We have also asked your teachers to check your progress carefully so if anyone is

- not achieving as well as expected, they notice this quickly and extra support is given to put them back on track.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector

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