

Tameside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131735
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	341209
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Bates
Headteacher	Gary Linford
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 22 lessons and observed 18 different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, four governors and many members of staff, the director of the local learning community, the coordinator of the extended schools' network and the School Improvement Partner. There were no meetings with parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to pupils' attainment and progress, assessment data, self-evaluation, school policies, the school improvement plan and safeguarding procedures. They also looked at samples of pupils' work, governing body minutes, and recent school reviews by the School Improvement Partner and local authority advisors. The 58 responses to parental questionnaires, and responses from pupils in Years 3 to 6, and staff, were also taken into account.

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

- the attainment and progress of pupils in the last year, especially middle ability and more able pupils throughout the school, and girls in Years 3 to 6
- the effect on the school of many recent changes in staff, and the procedures for the induction of new staff and newly qualified teachers
- the reasons for a history of poor attendance, and the extent of improvement following the introduction of new procedures
- the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work by governors and school leaders and their impact upon school improvement.

Information about the school

Tameside is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. There are a number of minority ethnic groups, the largest being of Polish origin. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, the largest group being pupils with moderate learning difficulties. There is a small proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English. The school has its own breakfast club on site. The school has achieved National Healthy School status and Quality in Extended Services status. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in the last three years.

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

Tameside is a satisfactory school which has gone through a period of difficult transition in the last three years with many changes in staff. Most importantly, under the evaluative and clear-sighted headteacher, the staffing structure is now much more stable, and all are contributing positively to a school which is showing increasing improvement in many ways. Improvements include the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the notable strength of provision for the care, support and guidance of pupils and a dramatic rise in the attendance of pupils. There is better provision for the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and some aspects of teaching have improved. The low attainment of pupils is proving harder to move quickly, but nevertheless it is moving upwards. The school is accurate in its self-evaluation, and accepts that these improvements have to be reinforced over time before it can be said to be fully sustained. During this time of change the school has benefitted from a good level of support from the local authority.

Good relationships are visible throughout this friendly, welcoming school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking responsibility, and feel safe and protected. They are enthusiastic learners and their behaviour in and out of school is good. Although this is a strong school community, and pupils have satisfactory involvement with the local community, these links are less evident nationally and worldwide. Most parents share their children's positive appreciation of the school, one commenting typically, 'The teachers are always very helpful, and I am very grateful for what they have done for my child'. However too few parents are involved in direct engagement with the school, in order to partner the school in the development of their children. The school understands that it must take more initiative to encourage parents and carers to take opportunities to work with staff for the benefit of their children.

The school has been trying for several years with little success to raise the low attainment of pupils in basic English and mathematical skills. In the last eighteen months, there have been indications of rising attainment which is confirmed by this inspection. Pupils who entered the school with skills mainly well below those expected for their age are now achieving satisfactorily and making satisfactory progress through the school. Although pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is still below average, the trend is upward. Their attainment in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology has improved most, although writing skills are still below average for many. More able and gifted and talented pupils are capable of reaching higher levels, and their learning has not yet been targeted sufficiently by the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving, because of effective support and guidance from an increasingly confident senior management team. However, the use of

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assessment data in teachers' planning is not used consistently through the school. Likewise, guidance given to pupils on how they can improve and evaluate their learning is not consistent in all classes. The school gains from good partnerships and links with learning communities and service providers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of pupils by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are always sufficiently extended in their learning, particularly the more able and gifted and talented pupils
 - school leaders improving the consistency of teachers' use of assessment data in planning,
 - teachers discussing more consistently with pupils how they think they are doing, whether they are being sufficiently challenged, and offering clear guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Raise the awareness and understanding of parents and carers of how they can be partners with the school in their children's education by:
 - introducing a range of opportunities for parents and carers to work alongside their children in school
 - involving parent and community governors more directly in regular contact with parents
 - encouraging parents to seek guidance and offer their views more frequently on the education of their children.
- Increase the provision for promoting community cohesion so that:
 - pupils develop a wider understanding of the range of communities and cultures in their own country
 - pupils have more opportunities to learn about cultural diversity in the wider world, by establishing links with other communities abroad.
- Approximately 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

The school is focusing more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection on raising the attainment of pupils. Although considerable effort has gone into raising attainment, it has been stubbornly low for several years in writing, reading, mathematics and science. This inspection has confirmed the school's view that there is now increasing improvement in attainment and learning throughout the school. Although the attainment of current Year 6 pupils is still low in writing, more pupils are reaching average levels in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology. Writing skills are still a main improvement area for the school, and the wider use of writing across the

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curriculum is helping a steady improvement. However, more able pupils are not always reaching the attainment levels of which they are capable. The great majority of pupils are making satisfactory and improving progress in their learning leading to satisfactory achievement. Girls in Years 3 to 6, whose progress had faltered, are making better gains in their learning. This applies also to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to the increasing number of Polish pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff are giving pupils many good opportunities to speak, which is helping to improve pupils' literacy skills. This was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 2 when pupils read and then eagerly analysed the story of 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning, are enthusiastic, cooperative and have good relationships with their teachers. The school has been successful in raising expectations of good behaviour which during the inspection was always good and frequently excellent.

Nearly all pupils, either verbally or through questionnaires, indicate that they feel safe in school, and always have an adult to turn too when in difficulty. They report isolated examples of bullying but feel that these are dealt with quickly and fairly. Their attendance, showing their enjoyment of school, and as a result of very strong measures taken by school leaders, has shown marked improvement in the last year after many years well below average, and is now average. Pupils readily accept responsibilities, are proud of the school, and their work, especially with their budget, on the school council. They are involved satisfactorily in the wider community, have a good understanding of what is right and wrong and are developing their knowledge of social and environmental issues. They are steadily improving their basic skills in readiness for their future lives.

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	4
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

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 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?

Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory, an increasing proportion is good. Most teachers in the school started fairly recently, and several are in their first year of teaching, but they are coming to terms quickly with the primary task of raising the attainment of pupils. They engage pupils well, have good relationships with them and try to adapt teaching to their particular needs and interests. This was observed in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 when pupils enjoyed solving problems about the distances between World Cup football venues in South Africa. Lesson planning is consistent through the school, which has helped improve the attainment of middle and lower attaining pupils. However, planning makes insufficient use of assessment data to accelerate the learning of more able and gifted and talented pupils through more challenging learning tasks. Teachers' marking and guidance to pupils is supportive and usually helpful although sometimes inconsistent in suggesting ways to improve. The intervention of learning support assistants contributes well to pupils' learning and progress, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum has been reviewed effectively by leaders and is suited to the needs of pupils, offering a range of creative and enrichment activities. It is enhanced by instrumental music tuition, good provision for information and communication technology, and residential visits in Years 4 and 6. In addition, extra-curricular clubs are supported well. Much of this helps pupils' moral and social development, but there are too few planned opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual education. Opportunities for developing English and mathematics are given regularly across the curriculum and are beginning to have a stronger impact on the development of pupils' basic skills.

Pupils are well supported, guided and cared for by sensitive staff who have a good knowledge of their needs. Provision for the pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is a strength of the school. This is passionately led by the special educational needs coordinator who has a lifelong knowledge of the community. The provision of nurture groups, 'Every Child Counts' counselling, and an early morning breakfast club, contribute very positively to the needs of pupils. Robust and direct procedures have been successfully introduced to deal with the low attendance rates of the last few years.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	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 determined headteacher has dealt well with the challenge of replacing most of the school's teachers and leaders in the last three years. He has built a staff who share his ambition for continued improvement in the school's provision for the learning and personal development of all pupils. The senior staff are developing into a clearly focused and rigorous management team, other staff, including learning support assistants, respond positively and enthusiastically to their leadership. There are improved strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the school has been notably successful in the induction of newly qualified teachers. Challenging targets for pupils are realistic, and the school is accurate and reflective in its self-evaluation. This is leading to an increasingly quicker rate of improvement in a number of areas, which the school has not managed in the past. Governors are becoming more active in the school, and have a better knowledge of how and where the school needs to improve. They have helped to make sure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective. However, governors are not involved sufficiently with the parent community, which needs more help in understanding how it can be involved in the education of its children.

The school has made satisfactory progress in promoting equality of opportunity by tackling the underachievement of various groups of pupils. This has been successful in part, but has not yet had sufficient effect on the attainment of more able pupils. The school has built a good range of partnerships, especially through the Wednesbury Learning Community and extended schools' network. This has been particularly helpful in providing support for pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There is satisfactory engagement with parents and carers, but school leaders are frustrated by the apparent lack of success they have in trying to involve more parents directly with the school. The contribution to community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily by the school, but there is insufficient provision for raising the knowledge and awareness of pupils of the cultural diversity of other communities in this country and globally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
	3

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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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below and sometimes well below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning. Some children this year are making better progress because their needs are more clearly recognised by the staff. This means most children enter Year 1 with skills still below those expected for their age, although some are reaching expected levels. Children enjoy their learning, have good relationships with each other and adults, are well motivated and becoming increasingly independent and self-confident. They have learned how to choose their activities and concentrate on them rather than moving rapidly from one to another.

Teaching is satisfactory, and sometimes good, and has improved in the last eighteen months. Adults work well together as a team, and ensure that children are kept safe, and understand the importance of being healthy. The classroom and outdoor environments are spacious, colourful and well-resourced and encourage learning, although children's displayed work could be labelled in a more child friendly way.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has led some good improvement, especially in the development of more personalised assessment recording. This is supported by the increased encouragement of children's independence and understanding of routines. Robust and appropriate policies for safeguarding, and the tracking of children's progress and their personal needs are well established, and leaders are clearly identifying areas to be improved. Staff work very hard to engage with parents who appreciate what the school provides for their children. Leaders realise though that despite their good efforts there is still a significant number of parents who they have not been able to involve sufficiently in their children's start to school life.

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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	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About 13% of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. This is a significantly lower response than normally received. A large majority of those who replied are very positive about the school. Almost all feel that their children enjoy school and are kept safe, that they are well informed about their children's progress, and that the teaching is good. A typical comment was, 'Every member of staff is so helpful, they all go the extra mile for the good of the child.' A few parents and carers have concerns about how the school deals with challenging behaviour. The inspection team judges that the school has introduced a number of strategies in recent times to improve behaviour. These are proving to be successful in nearly all cases, and behaviour is better than reported in the last inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tameside 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 434 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	45	29	50	2	3	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	29	50	28	48	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	43	30	52	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	55	22	38	2	3	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	30	52	26	45	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	41	30	52	2	3	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	40	29	50	5	9	1	2
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)	17	29	35	60	5	9	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	48	26	45	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	33	29	50	7	12	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	33	33	57	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	21	36	32	55	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	50	25	43	3	5	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tameside Primary School, Wednesbury, WS10 0EZ

On behalf of the team, I would like to thank you for your cheerful and friendly welcome to us when we visited the school. We were especially pleased to see how well you behaved in classes and outside. You were polite and chatty and very respectful to your teachers and other adults. It is good to hear that you feel safe and that you know how to lead healthy lives. We think that you go to a satisfactory school which is improving quickly.

Your school cares for you very well, especially those of you who need a lot of help. We enjoyed seeing how well you get on with your teachers and hearing about your trips out, your residentials and how the school council uses its budget. Your work is getting better steadily and we think you do well in ICT and Art, and noticed how so many of you have improved your reading.

We think that with your help the school can improve even more, and we are making suggestions as to how your teachers and headteacher can do this. We would like all your teachers to help you to understand better how you can improve your learning. We would also like them to help some of you who can learn easily and quickly to have more challenging work so that you can do even better. Secondly, although many of your parents think that the school is doing a good job, we would like the school to encourage more of your parents to join with the school in helping you learn. You can help a lot by telling them about what you do at school. Finally, although you know much about your school and where you live, you should learn more about how other people live in this country, and in other countries around the world.

We hope that you will help and that you will continue to improve your learning. We hope you enjoyed the music festival, and that you continue to enjoy yourselves at Tameside.

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite

Lead inspector

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