



Tower Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116142
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279758
Inspection dates 3 November 2005 to 4 November 2005
Reporting inspector Lynn Bappa AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fowler Road
School category	Community		Farnborough
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Hampshire GU14 0BW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01252541786
Number on roll	182	Fax number	01252376208
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Terry Genis
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Mark Dunbavand

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 3 November 2005 - 4 November 2005	Inspection number 279758
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Tower Hill School is an average sized school with 180 pupils. A significant proportion of the pupils come from lower socio-economic backgrounds and there is a higher than average percentage of pupils on free school meals. The school has higher than average mobility with many pupils leaving or joining throughout the year. The school receives money to fund a breakfast club. Class sizes are smaller than average because the numbers on roll are declining as population patterns in the area change. The school is fortunate to have two award-winning new classrooms and an outdoor amphitheatre.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges itself to be satisfactory overall, and inspectors agree. There is a clear drive towards improvement. Issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its action planning for the future is focused appropriately on raising standards. As a result, standards and achievement have improved in English and mathematics, although there is still a legacy of under-achievement in science. The school is tackling this. Children in the Foundation Stage enter the school with well below average attainment. Provision is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress in their work and in their personal and social development. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, although too many pupils behave badly in some of their lessons. Behaviour in the playground, however, is good. Teaching is satisfactory, although some lessons still lack sparkle and challenge.

What the school should do to improve further

* Continue to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. * Support teachers to improve their teaching further and increase the number of good lessons that are taught. * Raise standards in science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school judges that its pupils make satisfactory progress overall and inspectors agree. From a low base, particularly in literacy, children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning and in their personal and social development. Standards by the ages of 7 and 11 are below the national average overall. In science and in writing, however, standards are well below the national average. Test results from 2004 showed that pupils at that time were making inadequate progress. However, 2005 provisional results and inspection evidence show that this situation has improved, particularly in English and mathematics, and that pupils of all ages now make satisfactory progress. The school is taking steps to deal with underachievement in science. Support provided for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, enables them to gain the basic skills for learning and to access the full curriculum. School data shows that their achievement is in line with that of other pupils. Higher attaining pupils generally make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school evaluates personal development as good, although inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic about school, with some describing it to inspectors as 'brilliant'. Pupils speak confidently about their activities and make the most of opportunities to develop their social skills. The school council, for example,

is active and pupils regularly raise funds for charity. They take pride in their achievements and are polite and friendly to visitors. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is average. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visits and trips and enjoy learning about the range of different cultures found in Britain. A recent visitor, for example, told pupils all about the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. Another visitor modelled and explained a Jewish Passover meal. Whole school assemblies have a family atmosphere where pupils' achievements are shared, celebrated and rewarded. Almost all pupils behave well around the school, in the dining hall and in the playground. Older children take good care of younger pupils and they speak enthusiastically about the Friendship Post in the playground, where they can meet new friends. However, attitudes and behaviour in some lessons are not good enough, with both pupils and teachers expressing some concerns about the bad behaviour of a minority of pupils. This disrupts the learning of others. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles, talking confidently, for example, about why they should eat vegetables with their lunch. Many attend the Breakfast Club and clearly enjoy the Huff'n'Puff activities at play time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school says that teaching is satisfactory and inspectors agree. The proportion of lessons judged by the school to be at least satisfactory is increasing. The picture is one of definite improvement. The drive to improve teaching and learning, and thereby raise standards of achievement, is now firmly at the heart of what the school is trying to do. There is a much clearer understanding by teachers of what makes a successful lesson. There are better opportunities to share good practice and lesson observations are beginning to be used as a tool to help teachers get better at what they are doing. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and play a pivotal role in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Teachers work very hard to manage behaviour, although the school needs to do more to ensure that strategies are used consistently and effectively. Children in reception are given a good start to their education and are presented with challenging tasks and activities that motivate them to work hard. Teachers generally make their lessons interesting and challenging, motivating pupils to want to learn. This is not always the case so some pupils lose interest and their behaviour is not as good as it should be. Classroom displays of pupils' work and other materials contributes well to pupils' learning in general.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school believes that its curriculum is satisfactory and inspectors agree. Provision for English and mathematics is improving, and the school has established effective links with the science department of a local secondary school to raise standards. There are similar plans for physical education. There is a French club and a good range of

extra-curricular activities and visits, including a science club, sports clubs, and visits to places such as Hampton Court. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care provided by the school for its pupils is satisfactory. The school is rightly proud of its family ethos and all adults show a high level of commitment and competence in promoting the health and safety of the children. All requirements for child protection are in place and are known to all adults. Every pupil is known and treated as an individual and this contributes well to the harmonious and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school and that incidents of bullying are dealt with well. Records of the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties are good and are used as the basis for effective support. The school works well with outside agencies and with parents. The reason that inspectors do not judge this aspect of provision to be better than satisfactory overall is because pupils are not yet given enough guidance to help them understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and senior leaders provide satisfactory leadership and are well supported by other teachers in the school. The leadership of the school is now more effectively focused on raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of learners. Self-evaluation is self-critical and largely accurate. Consequently, the school is now well placed to build on its recent improvements and to continue its drive to raise standards and to tackle the legacy of under-achievement in science. There is a strong commitment towards the inclusion of all learners. New children are warmly welcomed to the school and the impact of this is seen in their growing sense of security and well being. There has been considerable change in the personnel of the governing body, so that a high percentage of members are only recently appointed. They are very supportive of the school and are undertaking training with considerable commitment. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school runs smoothly and there are clear and well understood daily routines.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school when we visited last week. We liked talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We also enjoyed having lunch with you and chatting to you in the playground and around the school.

These are the things we liked best about your school: * You are friendly, kind and helpful to each other and to your teachers. Most of you work hard in your lessons and try your best. * The headteacher and the other teachers are working hard to make your school better. * Your teachers take good care of you and there is a real family atmosphere in the school. Older pupils take good care of the younger children in the playground and at lunch times.

This is what we have asked your school to do now. There are also some things that you can do to make your school get better: * Teachers will help you to do better in English, mathematics and science. * More lessons will contain exciting and interesting work that will make you think hard. * You can help yourselves by behaving well at all times. Thank you again for welcoming us to your school.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Bappa, Lead Inspector