

Tilney All Saints Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121078
Local Authority	NORFOLK
Inspection number	291996
Inspection date	5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	82
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Audrey Wootton
Headteacher	Mr Brian James
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Shepherdsgate Road Tilney All Saints King's Lynn Norfolk PE34 4RP
Telephone number	01553 828209
Fax number	01553 828209

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	5 July 2007
Inspection number	291996

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves an agricultural district with mixed housing and some significant levels of rural social and economic disadvantage. Pupils come from the local village and from isolated settlements over a wide area. All the pupils are of White British background and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is higher than average but fewer pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. There are currently only three classes. There have been difficulties in the past in recruiting staff and filling absences. The headteacher is new and has been in post six months.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that offers satisfactory value for money and is improving as it emerges from a period of transition. The new headteacher is accepted and respected by the school community for his calm, open and purposeful approach. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, so children in Reception achieve well in their first year of schooling. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are somewhat above those expected for their age. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. However, standards in writing in Years 1 and 2 are well below average because pupils do not have enough guidance in developing their skills through extended pieces of work.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships with pupils are good and they are keen to learn. Teachers use technology well to engage and interest pupils in their learning. The pace of lessons varies, as sometimes the introduction takes too long and pupils do not have enough time for their independent activities. Planning is detailed and tasks are generally well matched to pupils' abilities, but occasionally there is not enough challenge for the most able. The satisfactory curriculum is broad and balanced, with information and communication technology (ICT) used well to link subjects together. The caring ethos of the school contributes well to pupils' good personal development and well-being. One parent noted, 'The staff are very kind and are always willing to talk to everyone.' Pupils have a good understanding of living healthily and know about eating a balanced diet and the importance of oral hygiene. They can describe how to keep safe on the roads and in risky situations. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They treat one another with respect and feel free from bullying. The school council is active in improving aspects of school life such as running a stationery shop and setting up a first aid post in the playground. Pupils are involved well in village life and have close links with the local church. They leave the school with the expected basic skills and are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education and their future lives.

There is satisfactory leadership and management. The new headteacher has introduced a breakfast club and a house system that have added to pupils' enjoyment of school and motivated them in their learning. He has formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to develop mainly through informal observations. Monitoring by the headteacher, subject leaders and governors is not sufficiently systematic at present to show staff clearly how things can be improved. Much development is through informal discussion and therefore some judgments about the school's effectiveness are over-generous. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There is good provision for pupils' pastoral care, and each is known as an individual within a family atmosphere. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory but marking does not always focus on specific learning points. There is a satisfactory capacity to improve, as the new headteacher has brought stability and purpose to the school. Furthermore, changes he has introduced are already having a beneficial impact on its ethos and on the personal development of pupils. It is too soon to see similar improvements working through in achievement and standards. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more precise guidance in developing writing skills through a wider variety of tasks, so standards rise and achievement improves in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve teaching so that more of it is good or better by injecting more pace into lessons, sharpening up marking and ensuring all pupils are fully challenged.

- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring by the headteacher, subject leaders and governors by making it more systematic and rigorous.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

While children enter the Foundation Stage with a very wide range of abilities, overall attainment on entry is in line with national expectations. Children then make good progress because they are given a good mix of structured activities and opportunities to explore and learn independently. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but is better in mathematics than it is in writing. This is because the range of activities for writing is too narrow and pupils are not given specific guidance in how to develop their skills. The achievement of some year groups has been affected in the past by frequent temporary staffing arrangements. This has been tackled and the present Year 6 pupils have caught up most of the lost ground, meeting the school's realistic targets. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average, a trend maintained in the latest 2007 national test results. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils learn about other countries and cultures through the curriculum and in themed days. They have a good sense of right and wrong and work and play as a harmonious community. Pupils enjoy school and most of them attend well. There are a few long-term absences that bring the figures below average in spite of the school's best efforts. The school council gives pupils a voice and they know their views are valued. One pupil said, 'The teachers will listen to your ideas - it's like your opinion matters.' Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel comfortable about sharing a worry with an adult, and often confide in their friends. Pupils like the new house system and gaining points for their good attitudes and accomplishments. They take part in cricket, tri-golf, tennis and football. Pupils understand about the dangers of smoking, misusing drugs and alcohol. They are developing soundly the skills they need for the next stage of their education, and their homework books help them to build good work habits.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons. They use a variety of methods to involve pupils in their learning, including working with the interactive whiteboards and discussing ideas in pairs. Too often, however, the introduction takes longer than expected and pupils have less time to build on their skills through independent tasks. This is what makes the majority of teaching satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic and respond well when the pace of lessons is brisker. Older pupils talk with pleasure about their work, including some vivid poems. One said, 'I really enjoyed doing this piece of work because I wrote what I felt inside.' Another said, 'I got into the feel of the poem'. Teaching assistants work well with pupils who have

learning difficulties and help them to make progress towards their individual targets. Tasks are planned to meet the needs of pupils of varying abilities, but in some cases there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

With mixed-age classes, the school operates a two-year rolling programme to ensure that pupils do not repeat work. The satisfactory curriculum is more balanced now than it was at the time of the last inspection and is becoming increasingly creative. French and Latin have been introduced. Parents are kept abreast of the work their children are covering through regular information leaflets. ICT is used well across the curriculum to make links between subjects. This contributes to pupils' good personal development and their positive attitudes to learning. There are some good examples of computer art and publishing on display. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. A parent commented that 'pupils respond well to fresh faces and fresh places'. The attractive and spacious grounds form a stimulating resource. The conservation area, for example, offers plenty of room for pupils to work, as they investigate the natural world. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs including football, yoga and art.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good; the ethos of the school is one of mutual respect where each individual counts. A parent said that her children 'are being given individual attention according to their abilities.' The school meets requirements for safeguarding its pupils. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties, and sharper targets on individual education plans. Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage, with frequent checks on pupils' progress, notes of their achievements and photographs of what they say and do. Elsewhere, assessment is not specific enough to give pupils a sure knowledge of what they must do to improve. In particular, marking is too general and the targets given to pupils are not always the most relevant for them to take the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has been through a time of uncertainty as it has sought to cope with rapid staff changes. The new headteacher has helped the school to settle and, with calm assurance, has given confidence to parents and pupils. He has made positive changes that have had an immediate impact on pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school, such as introducing the house system. He has also begun to influence teaching and learning, introducing a new electronic tracking system that shows teachers more clearly how well their pupils are progressing. Subject leaders do not have enough time to monitor their areas rigorously and much of the school's assessment of its performance is too informal. However, the new headteacher has a realistic view of the school's performance. Governors are very supportive of the school, for example helping out with the breakfast club, but do not visit systematically to check on its progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tilney All Saints Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Tilney All Saints, Norfolk, PE34 4RP

Thank you for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed looking at your work and talking with you about your views. Your school has come through a period of change and is a satisfactory and improving school. You told me you feel Mr. James has helped things to improve, and you like the way he listens to your opinions. I agree with you. Changes he has introduced, such as the breakfast club and the new house system, are making school more enjoyable and enabling you to focus more on your learning. The youngest children get off to a good start because there is an interesting mix of activities for them to enjoy, some led by an adult and others chosen by themselves. Your behaviour is good and you are enthusiastic about your lessons which helps you to make the progress we would expect. You have a good understanding about living healthily and take part in plenty of sports. You say you feel safe in school and that you care for each other. You make a good contribution to your school community, for example in keeping the 'Perfect Place' conservation area in good shape for others to enjoy. You are also involved in village life and with the local church.

It is good that you find your lessons interesting. I think you do not always have enough time to practise what you are learning because the start of the lesson sometimes goes on too long. The teachers plan work to suit you, but sometimes it can be too easy for some of you. I have asked them to check that it is always hard enough for all of you. I also feel it would be helpful for marking to explain to you more clearly how you can improve so that you will know what you need to do next. I enjoyed your poems and stories. The older pupils can write in a variety of ways. I would like to see more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to put their skills to use so that their writing also improves. I have asked Mr James and other leaders and governors to keep a close eye on how well the school is doing so that it continues to get better all the time.

Thank you once again for your help and my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr. N. Butt,

Lead inspector