

Tang Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121468
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	295422
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Wendy Ripley HMI

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 on roll	
School	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Ruth Potter
Headteacher	Miss Janet Colling
Date of previous school inspection	15 February 2006
School address	Sixth Avenue York North Yorkshire YO31 0UT
Telephone number	01904 424765
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. At the time of the last inspection, in February 2006, the school was judged to require significant improvement in relation to teaching, learning, standards and achievement and punctuality.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school with a Nursery. It serves an area with considerable levels of social and economic deprivation in York. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high, as is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. A small minority of pupils have severe behavioural difficulties. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the start of the school year has increased recently. Staffing, including the leadership of the school, has been unsettled for the past five years. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. This is an improving school that has come a long way in the past year. The areas requiring significant improvement at the last inspection have been tackled robustly. Tang Hall now provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. It has the capacity to improve further. The new headteacher has led the school through a period of great change and development with commitment and a resolute approach. This, coupled with the appointment of three new teachers, and excellent intensive support from the local authority, has resulted in many improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated and there is now a higher proportion of good teaching.

Children enter the Nursery with limited skills and experiences. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that, by the end of Reception, standards are closer to expected levels. Improved teaching means that pupils now make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards are beginning to rise. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points as a result of well-targeted support. However, not enough pupils are reaching an above average standard for their age.

The school has worked hard to improve attendance rates, which were unsatisfactory at the last inspection. As a result of better monitoring and a range of incentives to encourage pupils to attend regularly, attendance rates have improved and are now satisfactory, being closer to the national average. Punctuality has improved, although a small number of pupils are still persistently late for school. This hinders the extent to which they make progress.

There are now stronger links with parents. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school because of the good care, guidance and support it provides for their children. There is good provision for pupils' personal development. Most pupils behave well. They are proud of their school and are well aware of school rules because they helped to draw them up. The school council provides an opportunity for pupils to have a say in the running of their school. Pupils enjoy sharing their achievements at the weekly celebration assemblies. The curriculum provides a broad and balanced education with a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Some lessons, however, are not as adventurous or exciting as they might be, and the quality of marking does not always make clear to pupils what they need to do next to improve.

Systems to monitor all aspects of the school's work have been improved, particularly teaching and the monitoring of pupils' progress. However, the school recognises that not all improvement strategies are evaluated sufficiently to measure their success and impact on raising standards and accelerating progress. Whilst assessment information is now plentiful, its usefulness is limited at present. This is because it is provided in a variety of formats which makes it difficult to interpret with rigour and precision.

The leadership team has a clear understanding of what needs to be done next to bring about further improvement and the school's self-evaluation matches inspection judgements in most respects.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement further and enable more pupils, particularly the more able, to achieve above average standards for their age.
- Build upon recent improvements to ensure that a higher proportion of teaching and learning is good or better.
- Ensure marking makes it clear to pupils what they need to do next to improve.

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Most children enter the Nursery with fairly limited skills and experiences, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps children achieve well and prepares them for their future learning. Good progress is made in most areas of learning, so that standards at the end of Reception are closer to expected levels.

Pupils' results in the 2006 national tests confirmed that the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory. Progress improved, particularly in writing and mathematics. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average but, given the very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they represent satisfactory progress.

Pupils' results in the 2006 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below average, particularly in English. Most pupils made inadequate progress throughout this key stage and boys performed less well than girls. That said, for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress was satisfactory. The school's most recent assessment information indicates that, in the current Years 5 and 6, standards are rising and pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate. Underachievement is reducing, although not enough pupils are reaching an above average standard for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for personal development and well-being. As a result, pupils make good progress in developing the personal skills and qualities that enable them to contribute to society. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have responsible attitudes to their work. A small number of pupils find it difficult to behave well. Nevertheless, behaviour is generally good because there are secure systems in place to encourage pupils to behave well and reward those who do so. Older pupils in particular are very clear about their individual learning targets and understand why doing well is important to their future economic well-being. They are keen to discuss their targets with adults including their parents. Pupils like being given roles of responsibility such as managing the 'tuck trolley' and being members of the school council. Pupils say that their views are taken into account and they understand why the school is not always able to act on their suggestions.

Most pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Relationships throughout the school are good. Bullying is not an issue and pupils know what they should do if it does occur. Pupils have an awareness of safety issues and understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. Breaks

and lunchtimes are enjoyable with a good range of organised activities. All pupils are involved in circle time where they learn to share their ideas and feelings on a range of topics.

In the past year, the school has introduced a number of effective measures to promote good attendance. Consequently, attendance rates have improved and are now closer to the national average, though still lower than they should be. Despite the school's best efforts, there are still a number of pupils who are persistently late for school. This adversely affects their progress. The home-school support worker is working hard with parents to address attendance and punctuality issues and provides invaluable additional help for those pupils who fall behind.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The new headteacher and the chair of governors, with extensive support from the local authority, have worked determinedly to tackle the inadequate teaching identified in the previous inspection report. As a result, teaching and learning are now satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage.

Lesson planning is consistent. Learning objectives and success criteria are used well in most lessons. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers work effectively alongside pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Behaviour management is effective in most classes. This ensures that the small number of pupils who have the potential to misbehave in lessons are closely monitored and any potential disruption nipped in the bud. Pupils are increasingly being involved in judging their own progress. The school rightly recognises that this remains an area for further development.

In the best lessons the pace is brisk. Pupils are focused and on task. An appropriate range of activities ensures that lessons are interesting. Pupils are actively engaged in their learning and share what they have learnt with the class. This promotes opportunities to monitor progress and pupils' understanding throughout the lesson. It also fosters a learning environment where pupils are increasingly confident to take risks and learn from their mistakes. This develops pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence and increases their expectations about what they can achieve. In lessons where the range of learning activities is not varied or challenging enough or the pace is too relaxed, some pupils do not make as much progress as they might.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included. In the Foundation Stage, children participate in a good range of activities that are well suited to the developmental needs of children of their age.

There is a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. Pupils have benefited from the increased range of educational trips, visits and visitors this year. There is a strong emphasis on developing the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, too many opportunities to incorporate speaking, listening and writing in all subjects are missed. Some lessons are not as practical or as adventurous as they might be. Support from the local authority has ensured there has been a focus on checking what pupils have learned and matching work to their individual needs. Clear targets for pupils to reach each year are now in place for both English and mathematics.

Staff work hard to make the school and each classroom as bright, attractive and lively as it can be given the constraints of the building. A wide variety of displays and progress monitoring 'walls' in classrooms, supports learning well. Provision for personal, social, emotional development and citizenship successfully promotes pupils' understanding of themselves and others.

'Every Child Matters' outcomes are given a high profile and reinforced throughout the school. For older pupils, links to the five outcomes are clearly made in their classrooms so that they understand how these fit in with their activities in lessons and around the school. Older pupils benefit from links with a local community school and from other strong local partnerships. For example, for Year 6 pupils, work with a Year 7 teacher had helped them learn more and make better progress as well as preparing them to move on to secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Recently improved systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the effectiveness of teaching and learning informs pupils' learning needs and target setting. Pupils particularly like the 'should, could, must' displays and other progress monitoring 'walls' in their rooms and enjoy using them. They refer to these regularly to track their own progress and use them to motivate themselves and each other. The quality of marking is variable. It does not always provide useful feedback to help pupils improve because it focuses too much on presentation and effort.

Increased opportunities to celebrate success ensure pupils and staff receive consistent messages about learning, behaviour and attendance and punctuality.

There are effective systems to ensure child protection and pupils' health and safety. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and effectively supported in the classroom. The assessment of these pupils' individual needs, and the standard of individual education plans drawn up for them, are beginning to improve now that new management arrangements are in place. The school recognises that pupils and parents should be more active participants in drawing up and reviewing education plans and has plans in place to address this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with some strong features. The headteacher and leadership team have successfully guided the school through a very unsettled period. Several new appointments have strengthened the staff team and this is more stable. The headteacher and re-invigorated staff team, aided by intensive support from the local authority, have tackled the key issues from the last inspection rigorously. Consequently, the quality of provision has improved.

Staff development has been prioritised. It has made a strong contribution to school improvement and has raised the standard of teaching and accelerated the pupils' rate of progress. Systems for planning lessons and monitoring pupils' achievements have been introduced and are being used consistently across the school. Some management practices lack focus and are not incisive enough. For example, the school has amassed a wide range of assessment information to track

pupils' progress. However, this is not yet readily accessible or 'user friendly' because it is presented in a range of different formats and lacks a clear overview. This makes it difficult to track rates of progress and to identify pupils who need additional support as well as to quantify the overall improvement the school has made.

The governors provide good support and have a clear understanding of the issues facing the school so they are able to challenge and hold the school to account. The school's self-evaluation is realistic, sets a clear agenda for improvement and recognises that there is still much work to be done. An emerging strength is the improving partnership with parents, who value the good range of information they receive about the school and the approachability of the staff.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	3
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	3
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	2

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?	2

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

As you know inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you to you all for helping us and making us feel so welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and were very interested to hear about the things you do and what you like about your school. You told us that you enjoy learning, you like your school and your teachers and you feel happy and safe when you are there. We think that the teachers take good care of you and provide you with a satisfactory standard of education. The new headteacher and all of the staff have worked very hard to make the school much better than it was a year ago. Here are some of the other things that we found out from our visit.

- Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- You try hard to do your best.
- You like to help around the school and feel proud when you have done well.
- You are getting very good at understanding learning goals and success criteria and knowing your own targets. You like using 'should, could and must' to monitor your progress and are very good at using this to motivate yourself and each other.
- A small number of you don't make it to school on time and this makes it difficult for you to make progress and do as well as you could. It also interrupts lessons, which is not fair to other pupils.

We also found some things that can be better in your school and we have asked the headteacher and the staff to think about these. These are the things they need to do:

- make lessons more exciting by finding more practical and interesting things for you to do
- make sure you all do as well as you possibly can
- let you know why you have done things well and what you can do next to improve.

You can help too by continuing to behave well, looking after each other, going to school regularly and arriving there on time. The main thing is to keep on enjoying school, learning as much as you can and being proud of yourselves for working hard and doing your best. Thank you again for being so friendly. You deserve to do well and we know that you can.