

# Tynsel Parkes CofE (VC) First School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124282            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Staffordshire     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 328097            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 4–5 February 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Doris Bell        |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>  | First                                |
| <b>School category</b>   | Voluntary controlled                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 3–9                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed                                |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |                                      |
| School (total)   | 179                                  |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0                                    |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years                                     | 0                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body                   |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Andrea Yorke                         |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Theresa Walters                      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 7 February 2006                      |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected             |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected             |
| <b>School address</b>  | School Road<br>Uttoxeter<br>ST14 7HE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 01889 256380                         |

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–9               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 4–5 February 2009 |
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**Fax number**

01889 256380

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This relatively large first school has an integrated unit for the Early Years Foundation Stage where Nursery and Reception children learn together. It also has Children's Centre status. A privately run setting for children from birth to age three operates on the school site and runs before- and after-school clubs. There has been a significant turnover of staff since the previous inspection. Since then, the school has had a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. The headteacher is passionate about making it the hub of the community and ensuring that provision improves until it is the very best the school can offer. Staff and governors fully support her vision. The school's motto, 'Loving and Learning Together', is manifest in the joy and laughter heard around the school as staff help pupils to learn in imaginative ways. The consistency with which pupils' learning and personal development are organised and managed in all age groups creates an ethos in which pupils feel safe, well cared for and able to learn. The vast majority of parents recognise this too, describing the school as 'friendly, warm, welcoming' and 'caring', a place where 'children blossom'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, as their good attendance and excellent behaviour show. Relationships are excellent throughout this well led and managed school.

Achievement is good. Standards are at least as expected for pupils' ages in Years 2 and 4, with significant minorities in each year group working at higher than expected levels. The measures taken to accelerate pupils' progress are beginning to feed through the school, causing it to revise its targets upwards to add the challenge pupils now need. Provision is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, enabling children to make good progress and reach or exceed the standards expected for the end of Reception. All of this is down to good teaching and a well-planned curriculum in all age groups.

Teachers make good use of all the information they have about pupils' learning as they plan their lessons. Marking is consistently effective in showing pupils how to improve. Pupils really appreciate the 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' comments that celebrate what they have done well and show them how to improve further. They are fully involved in assessing their own and each other's learning. Within this very positive picture, however, there are times when pupils complete activities and mark time till the teacher calls the class together. On other occasions, when working with one group, the teacher does not always keep a close enough eye on how well other groups are doing. Teachers promote literacy skills effectively in different subjects and this contributes to the improvements seen in reading and writing. However, they miss opportunities to promote numeracy skills in the same way. Tackling this is a focus for next year for the school.

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. The school's excellent links with outside agencies contribute to this, not least for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose learning is exceptionally well managed. Good attention is also given to helping more able pupils reach the higher levels of which they are capable, resulting in an increasing proportion of pupils undertaking work beyond that expected for their age. Teaching and learning are rigorously checked and teachers are given clear points for improvement to which they respond well, sharing ideas and helping each other. Governors support the school well. The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies what it does well, what it needs to do next, and how it intends to get there. The consistency with which all policies and procedures are implemented across the school, and the improved teaching and learning arising from this, demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The good provision for Early Years Foundation Stage meets the needs of Nursery and Reception children in a well-planned curriculum that places strong emphasis on developing basic skills such as phonics, writing and counting. Staff are continuously assessing and tracking children's progress and finding ways of encouraging them to learn more. They use imaginative approaches and provide children with a good balance of teacher-directed and child-selected activities. Staff guide children carefully through small steps in learning, for example helping children to decide the best way to organise small world settings in order to play and learn more constructively. They also share planning with the children and develop in them an early understanding of how targets help them to understand where they are going. Occasionally, however, staff miss opportunities to extend children's underdeveloped vocabulary, accepting one-word answers instead of asking children to answer in full sentences or give fuller explanations of what they mean.

Good links with parents, established before children start school, enable children to settle quickly into well-established routines. Children develop good personal and social skills. They work together well and welcome visitors, including their younger companions from the on-site Children's Centre. Their growing confidence and maturity arise out of the school's excellent attention to their welfare and well-being, and the warm, generous relationships modelled by the staff. Staff ensure children are safe at all times, including during the current building works. Good leadership and management have made Early Years Foundation Stage provision one in which children flourish in a cheerful, happy environment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers always give pupils enough work to keep them learning throughout a lesson, and that they keep a close eye on how well all groups in their class are doing, even when focusing on one.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in different subjects, in the same way that they now use their literacy skills

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children start Nursery with levels of skill that are below those expected for their age. They achieve well throughout the school, whatever their ability or background. Evidence from the work of pupils currently in Year 2 indicates standards are edging towards above average this year. However, as in Years 3 and 4, pupils make better progress in reading and writing than in mathematics. In Year 4, standards are at least as expected for pupils' ages, with a significant minority of pupils engaging in Year 5 work. The school's drive to improve pupils' ability to read and understand different texts in different subjects is paying off and having a beneficial impact on their writing. So too are the daily guided reading sessions, the focus on phonics which starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the rota for hearing pupils read individually. As well, all of this is beginning to improve pupils' ability to work out how to solve word problems in mathematics, something that pupils themselves recognise. Pupils miss opportunities to consolidate their numeracy skills in the same way as their literacy skills because the school has not yet focused on ways to do this. Although writing is improving, the relatively limited vocabulary evident when pupils start school affects the quality of their writing for some time.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are open, responsive, respectful and caring. They thoroughly enjoy school and some say they want the weekend to go quickly so that they can come again. They reflect sensibly on what they learn, growing in confidence and self-esteem and becoming increasingly secure about their place in the world. They know right from wrong and show concern about topical issues such as pollution and recycling. They form excellent relationships with each other and with adults, and undertake various responsibilities with huge enthusiasm, for example as play leaders, school councillors or helping in the school office during lunchtime. Play leaders are particularly proud of their roles, explaining how their training has helped them to help other pupils during playtimes.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. They contribute much to the school and participate wholeheartedly in events in and beyond the locality. Pupils learn a lot about different faiths, cultures, traditions and backgrounds across the world, but their understanding of the different cultures in British society is slightly less well developed. Work on this aspect, which is now fully integrated into the curriculum, is relatively recent and has not had enough time to impact fully on pupils' understanding. Pupils have a good understanding of how to follow a healthy lifestyle. They feel safe in school and know whom to turn to should they have any concerns. Their good progress in basic skills and their growing ability to communicate effectively, work as a team, on their own or in different groups prepare them well for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers make good use of assessment information to match activities closely to pupils' different stages of learning. They have successfully helped pupils to identify how they learn, and they vary how they teach to ensure they reach everybody. Occasionally, however, learning time is lost in lessons when pupils do not have enough work to carry them all the way through, or when a teacher, while working with one group, does not keep a close enough check on pupils who are working independently. Nevertheless, teachers usually make learning very enjoyable for the pupils. They know their pupils well and use the competent support staff very effectively to help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Teachers put a great deal of thought into the high quality classroom displays, which are a good mix of pupils' work and guidance about what they have to learn and how. Class targets are also on display, supplemented by 'menu cards' on tables for different groups. Pupils enjoy personalising the ways in which they show who is working towards which target. The consistency of approach seen in all classes means that pupils are very familiar with, and respond well to, the high expectations teachers have of their behaviour and work rate as they move from class to class. All of this contributes to their good personal development and is a key factor in the improving progress evident throughout the school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a vibrant curriculum closely linked to pupils' interests and learning needs. Links between subjects are carefully thought through so that learning in one subject reinforces that in another. The creative approach taken particularly boosts literacy and information and communication technology skills. Planning for the development of numeracy skills across the curriculum is less well developed.

The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' personal, social and health education as does the excellent range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. An integral part of these is the promotion of pupils' understanding of different cultures at home and abroad. The curriculum is particularly rich in opportunities for learning in a practical way. For example, the role play areas in each classroom provide additional challenges for pupils to become increasingly independent in their learning. These range from encouraging young children to learn through play, to topic work in Years 3 and 4, where pupils 'visit' a Roman marketplace and explore an Indian environment.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The staff's concern for pupils' welfare and well-being is outstanding. Safeguarding meets current requirements, and high levels of care are backed up by exemplary documentation showing the school's oversight and monitoring of all pupils. This particularly contributes to the progress of pupils whose learning is in danger of falling behind for whatever reason. The excellent provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means fewer and fewer pupils remain on the school's special educational needs register for long periods of time. These pupils, and pupils identified as more able, have well-constructed individual education plans to which they contribute, and which are successfully accelerating their learning. The school draws on its excellent relationships with a wide range of specialist agencies to help pupils, carefully tracking the impact of any additional support on their learning and personal development. As a result of all of this, pupils know what they are aiming for and how to get there. The consistently high quality of teachers' marking helps them to move forward step by step.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The very clear direction emanating from the headteacher's drive to move the school to outstanding is evident in the strong teamwork amongst all staff and in the pupils' steadily improving progress. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are robust. Senior and middle managers are effectively involved in them, and staff benefit from the clear action points that help improve their teaching. Senior managers keep a close track on every pupil's progress and ensure swift action is taken to help anyone who is falling behind in their learning. Middle managers carry out their own checks on teaching but are not yet fully involved in analysing data and determining from it what action to take. This work is developing well, as is the work of the relatively new senior management team.

The school uses its improvement plan well as a working document to drive improvement. However, the success criteria do not always include clear, quantifiable data so that the impact of the actions on pupils' progress can be easily measured. Governors fulfil their roles well, questioning the school and helping to determine the way forward. They have a clear understanding of what is required to promote community cohesion and have recently taken steps to ensure this is done well. For example, the curriculum now provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate different faiths, cultures and backgrounds. This includes visiting different places of worship, as on the recent 'Faith Walk' in Derby, learning first hand from pupils within the school and from visitors from the local and wider community. It also includes researching different cultures at home and abroad as part of topic work. The breaking down of stereotypes figures largely in the school's work and was particularly well demonstrated in an assembly observed during the inspection.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?              | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve?   | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 2 |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress                           | 2 |

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education  | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 1 |

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 2   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 2   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 2   |
| 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  |

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

6 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tynsel Parkes C of E (VC) First School, Uttoxeter ST14 7HE

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. As well as what you told us, the joy and laughter we saw and heard around the school showed us how happy you are there, and how much you enjoy learning. We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school where everyone works together to help each one of you achieve as much as you can. The school is particularly good at finding ways of stopping you falling behind in your learning. As a result, all of you make good progress and more and more of you are doing much harder work than is expected for your age.

Staff care deeply for each one of you. They guide and support you exceptionally well, making sure you are safe in school and know how to keep yourselves safe at all times. You know how important it is to eat healthily and take plenty of exercise, and how working as part of a group or a team, or even on your own, are all skills that will help you when you grow up. You have a really good understanding of how to improve your own work. You follow the good guidance teachers give you in their marking, and have a really good understanding of your targets and how to reach them. You have helped to make your classrooms really bright and cheerful places to learn by contributing to the displays and showing how you move step by step from one target to the next.

Your teachers make learning enjoyable for you, giving you plenty of interesting and practical activities to suit the way you learn, and lots of help to succeed in your learning. However, we noted that sometimes you do not have enough work to take you right to the end of a lesson, and occasionally, when working with one group, the teacher does not notice that some others of you might be struggling. We have asked the school to sort these things out. Teachers plan your topic work well and encourage you at every opportunity to use your literacy skills in different subjects. They do not often enough encourage you to use your numeracy skills in the same way, and this is something else we have asked them to do.

You can help by continuing to work hard and thinking about how, by using literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects, you might reach your targets faster. We hope you will continue to enjoy learning for the rest of your lives as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector