

Turvey Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109489
Local Authority	Bedfordshire
Inspection number	337302
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter J Thompson

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

Type of school	First
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A. Franklin
Headteacher	Mr G. Swidenbank
Date of previous school inspection	0 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, one attending the school for half a day. The inspectors visited ten lessons, and held meetings with governors and staff. They observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and analysed questionnaires from 38 parents and carers, 29 pupils and nine staff.

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

- the attainment and progress at the end of Year 4
- the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning
- the curriculum and how it meets the needs of all pupils
- improvements in the effectiveness of the governing body.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average. The majority of pupils come from White British families and no pupil is eligible for free school meals. All pupils speak English as their first language. Only a small number have special educational needs. Many pupils attend local Nurseries before they join Reception.

The school gained the Healthy School Award in 2006. In 2009, the school was accredited with the International School Award for its international ethos and curriculum-based international work.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Turvey Lower school is a good school which has significantly improved since the last inspection. It enjoys the overwhelming support of parents, pupils and staff.

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupils make good progress during the period they are at the school. As a result, standards at the end of Year 4 are above average and achievement is good. The very small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities makes the same progress as their peers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is effective. Pupils enjoy their learning and reach above expected levels for their age in most areas of learning. The quality of teaching for the youngest children is good. Teachers provide a good range of activities and help pupils to develop well. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

The school provides a safe environment. Pupils feel very secure and are able to seek the support of adults on the small number of occasions when this is required. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Many pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and all pupils have a great deal of knowledge and understanding of the factors which affect their physical well-being. Pupils are very keen to take part in physical exercise and eat healthily. As a result, the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Pupils contribute to the school and wider communities well. They play an active part in school councils, fund raising for charities and local activities. Pupils develop their work-based and other skills well. At the end of Year 4, their oral, literacy and numeracy skills are above those expected and they have learnt to use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively. Attendance is very high. Helped by the good school ethos, pupils develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. They have a good understanding of how to live and work with other children and adults.

The quality of teaching is good overall and promotes learning, progress and enjoyment well. In a small number of less successful lessons, the most able pupils need to be challenged more in order to help them reach their full potential. Pupils work is assessed well. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils and the inclusion of French in the final two years is a good innovative feature. Activities outside normal school hours are good and enjoyed by all pupils, particularly the games and sport activities. Good care and support promotes the personal development and well-being of pupils well. Parents and pupils have access to a good range of information.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Senior teachers have effectively dealt with all the issues for improvement identified in the last inspection report. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and high

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expectations; these are shared with and supported by all of the staff. Self-evaluation is based on a sound analysis of the school's performance and accurately identifies the strengths and weakness of the school. The school overestimates the quality of teaching in some lessons.

The oversight of the governing body has improved since the last Inspection. It is beginning to gather first-hand information to hold leaders to account but rightly recognises that more needs to be done. The senior staff and governing body work well together and are in a good position to drive the school forward. The school has a good capacity to sustain improvement

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers more consistently challenge the most able in lessons.
- Improve the methods for observing lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching more consistently.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body in order that it is more able to hold senior staff to account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Attainment on entry fluctuates from year to year due to the small number entering the school. At the end of Year 2, attainments in reading, writing and mathematics are all significantly above those expected. Standards in writing and mathematics have improved over the previous three years. At the end of Year 4, standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are all above average. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level of attainment is higher in reading than writing and mathematics. All pupils make good progress during the time they are at the school. As a result of variations in the quality of teaching, progress is greater in Year 3 and 4 than in Years 1 and 2.

In all the lessons observed pupils worked in an appropriate and safe manner. Pupils say they feel safe in school. Behaviour observed during lessons and around the school was good. The school is fully committed to encouraging pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils grow their own vegetables in the school's grounds and participate in a good range of games and sports outside normal school hours. During the inspection pupils in Years 3 and 4 took part in sport activities in another local school and pupils in Year 2 were observed performing floor exercises in the gymnasium. Pupils take an active part in school councils and raise funds for Barnados, Save the Children Fund and Children in Need. Pupils' above average attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and skill in using ICT prepares them well for the world of work. The school has a strong Christian ethos and is supported well by the local vicar, a member of the governing body. Pupils have a willingness to work together and with their teachers. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils undertake cultural visits and year round international work well. The Healthy and International School Awards have significant beneficial impact on learning.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall. It is best in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 3 and 4. The majority of teachers plan their lessons well and have a secure knowledge of the curriculum subjects. Most use a good range of teaching styles and time effectively. New technology was used appropriately and teaching assistants played an effective part in all the lessons observed. For example, in a lesson on phonics the teacher taught the most able pupils and the teaching assistant taught the remainder of the group in the library well. In most lessons pupils have opportunities to work independently. In the less successful lessons, teachers do not challenge the most able sufficiently.

The curriculum is good. The required broad range of subjects is provided and the time allocated to each subject is appropriate. The inclusion of French in the final two years is a good feature of the curriculum.

The school is caring and provides good guidance and support to its pupils. Individual pupils receive good help and guidance in lessons and teachers are patient and caring. Parents and pupils are well informed through newsletters, the school's website, individual reports and parents' evenings.

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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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff work well together. The subject co-ordinators' role has been enhanced and they now play a leading role in the school. The staff set challenging and effective targets. The evaluation of the quality of teaching is inconsistent. The senior staff works very well with other providers and outside services to promote learning and well being of the pupils.

Under the leadership of a recently appointed chairperson, the governing body has overcome many of its recent difficulties and is satisfactory. It meets all its statutory responsibilities. It is beginning to gather first-hand information to hold leaders to account but rightly recognises that more needs to be done.

The school involves parents in the work of the school, surveys their opinions and discusses issues with them well. One outcome from this dialogue is the improvement in attendance that has been achieved since the last inspection. The school is engaged in a number of very effective local partnerships which promotes pupils' learning and well-being. Boys and girls are given equal opportunities to perform and develop well.

The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is satisfactory. Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff. The school has clear policies for health and safety, which are monitored regularly. The school grounds are very secure. Safety checks are regularly made by the appropriate external authorities and any recommendations they make are acted upon.

The school promotes community cohesion well. The school is very inclusive and pupils engage in many activities outside the school which enhances local community cohesion. The International School Award is evidence of the pupils' awareness of international matters. All resources are deployed effectively and the school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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	
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. At the end of the Reception year the national expectations are reached in all areas of learning. Mathematical awareness is good, children can count the number of objects they are using and compare long and short objects well. Communication and problem solving skills are above those expected but social and personal skills are below expectation; children have a low attention span and find sharing difficult. In a good lesson, children were seen comparing lengths and colours and counting money when buying ribbons in the school shop for their teddy bears. Both indoor and outdoor facilities are provided but there is a general lack of space. The curriculum is good and provides a wide range of activities. The quality of teaching is good and activities well planned. Staff are very knowledgeable and well deployed to support and challenge pupils. Assessment of children's performance is good and well recorded.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a good response from parents to the questionnaire. The inspectors agree with the parents that Turvey Lower School is a good school. Almost all those that responded (97%) were happy with their child's experience at the school and the same

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proportion confirmed that their child enjoyed school. The inspectors agree with parents that the teaching and curriculum are good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Turvey Lower 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	82	6	16	0	0	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	29	76	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	58	15	39	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	58	13	34	0	0	2	5
The teaching is good at this school	24	63	13	34	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	50	15	39	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	63	13	34	1	3	0	0
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)	24	63	10	26	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	55	13	34	0	0	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	47	16	42	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	50	15	39	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	63	11	29	3	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	68	11	29	1	2	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



21 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Turvey Lower School, Turvey, MK34 8DY

I enjoyed my visit to your school and welcomed the opportunity to see you at work in your lessons. I thought that you would like to know what I found out about your school. You enter the school with the same knowledge and skills as other children but you make better progress than many children often manage to do in other schools. When you leave your reading, writing and mathematical skills are above the expected level. Your mathematical skills are not at as high a level as your reading and writing skills, so you need more help during your mathematics lessons. Most of the lessons I visited were good and I was able to see you undertake lots of interesting activities. Your teachers set you targets that help you to see what you have to do. You met most of these targets but I noticed that teachers are not always challenging the most able of you in lessons and asked your teachers to correct this.

Yours is a very pleasant school which provides you with a safe and good environment in which to learn. All the adults in the school take good care of you and help you whenever they can. I was impressed with the way you behaved in the school and worked really well with the teachers. I noticed that you are very aware that you need to live a healthy life and that the school is helping you as much as it can to do this. Those children on the school council do a good job.

These are the other things the school needs to do:

- develop its procedures for observing lessons so that they are more effective
- continue to develop the governing body so that it can guide your school a little better.

My best wishes for the future

Dr Peter J Thompson

Lead Inspector

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