

Terling Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115166
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	326142
Inspection dates	11–12 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Evans
Headteacher	Mrs M L Rumsey
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 October 2005
School address	New Road Terling Chelmsford Essex CM23 2PN
Telephone number	01245 233206
Fax number	01245 233612

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Terling is much smaller than most primary schools. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion entitled to free school meals is half the national average. The school has a below average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of these have moderate learning difficulties. The school has gained the following awards: Investors in People, Advanced Healthy Schools, Eco-Schools Bronze and Sports Activemark. Children enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are typical for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Terling is a good school. It has some significant strengths. Its leadership and management are good. The new headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, has successfully built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection report. She has introduced even more rigour in the school's good systems for checking pupils' progress and the school's provision. In addition, the school's very good range of improvement projects have lifted standards and quickened progress throughout the school. The staff work closely as a team and their morale is high. All the staff ensure that there is a close family atmosphere resulting in pastoral care for pupils and personal development that are both outstanding. Parents are almost unanimous in their support. As one parent said, 'My son goes into school happy and smiling and he comes out happy and smiling'. While many pupils' attendance is good, overall rates have recently dropped to an average level. Although the school has very good systems in place to boost attendance, some families are taking holidays during term time and this is having an adverse effect on overall attendance rates.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They are appreciative of the new hot school meals and are keenly aware of how important a balanced diet is in adopting a healthy lifestyle. They particularly enjoy the wide range of sports and musical activities which are provided as part of a well enriched curriculum. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils in all four classes have very positive attitudes to school and learning. This contributes well to the good progress pupils make throughout the school. They look forward keenly to the weekly celebration assembly and delight in the successes of other pupils.

Standards are rising at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and are above average. In the past they have been average but they have improved considerably, particularly in science which has resulted in almost all the Year 6 pupils gaining the higher level. This improvement has been brought about through the reviewing of the science curriculum and providing a much stronger focus on investigational science. The school has taken action to raise standards in writing, and the good emphasis on writing at greater length and improved spelling is starting to quicken progress. The school recognises that more can be done to lift the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in English.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The refined systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress means that any underachievement is quickly identified and additional support provided. Teachers are held to account for pupils' progress and they are generally aware of the different learning needs of pupils in their classes, helping them to plan accordingly. However, this is not always the case. Even though the more able pupils are now making better progress, there is a legacy of achievement which was satisfactory at best that is only starting to be overcome. However, given the good quality of the provision and the good progress now made by pupils, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception year with skills that are similar to those typically found nationally for four-year olds. They achieve well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. By the time that they leave the Reception class most attain the required learning goals and some children exceed them. Many parents commented on how well their children settle in the Reception class. This is because the staff use their observations and assessments effectively to identify and support children's varying needs. Because the provision is good, children achieve well and make good progress towards the required learning goals. The current three children in the Reception class have settled very well. They are secure and outstandingly confident and have already developed a strong understanding of the routines of the classroom. Staff work extremely well together as a team to provide a safe, secure and vibrant learning environment. They make sure that their plans provide a good balance between those activities that are directed by adults and those that the children choose for themselves. The outdoor space is not ideal because the ground slopes away quite sharply and also there is no direct access to the outside space from the classroom. However, the staff make the best of what is available and the resources for outdoor learning are good. There are good links with other pre-school providers and this aids the children's induction into school. Leadership and management are good and led by the deputy head. She uses her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm to make improvements to the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in writing at the end of Year 6.
- Improve levels of attendance by reducing the number of parents who take holidays during term time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards in the 2008 national tests have improved significantly from previous years at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2 tests, there has been an improvement in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards here are now above expected levels. Standards for Year 6 were exceptionally high in science and above expected levels in mathematics. Additional focused support for pupils that find learning easy is starting to pay benefits. This is a key reason why the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level (Level 5) at the end of Year 6 has shown such a dramatic improvement. In English, there has been an improvement though the proportion gaining the higher level remains average. This is due to a legacy of satisfactory achievement in the past, though progress is quickening, particularly in reading. The school is aware that standards in writing and spelling lag slightly behind those in reading. Very good support for pupils who need some extra help with their learning enables them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They develop an excellent understanding and respect for other people's differences because staff consistently emphasise the importance of recognising talents in everyone. Behaviour is excellent and there is a calm and well-ordered learning environment. Although the school has a wide range of good measures to improve attendance, it is at the national average. This is mainly because too many parents remove their children to take holidays in term time. Pupils are exceptionally well aware of safety issues and they speak knowledgeably about the need to protect themselves from the effects of the sun and matters such as safety on the trim-trail. They enjoy taking on responsibilities as council members, classroom helpers and helping the Reception children during playtimes. The school council is proud of its contribution helping to design the new school kitchen and selecting equipment for outdoor games. Pupils' good personal and learning skills prepare them well for their move to secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes so pupils are keen to learn. Lessons are well-prepared with clear objectives and success criteria. These are used well by teachers when summing up lessons and checking how well pupils have progressed towards their targets. Teaching assistants provide confident and competent support for the pupils with whom they work. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to introduce lessons and enliven learning. Teachers' assessment information is used well to identify ability groups particularly in literacy and numeracy. However, work is not always consistently well-matched to pupils' learning needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Much work has been done to strengthen the quality and range of the curriculum since the previous inspection. It effectively promotes pupils' personal and academic development. The key change has been the strong and appropriate emphasis made on linking subjects together to make learning real and meaningful. Because all main topic themes are covered by the whole school there is much lively discussion across the different year classes about the work in hand. This also enables exciting work to be produced such as that in the World War 2 topic when pupils enjoyed activities across a wide range of subjects. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic when talking about how senior citizens in the village joined them and recounted their first-hand experiences. These new developments now need to bed down. The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in music and sport. The pupils are very proud of the fact that everyone learns a musical instrument.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff take outstanding care of pupils and their support is excellent. The procedures to protect and safeguard pupils are excellent and fully comply with regulations. Parents commented on the good opportunities that are provided for them to support their children. There have been effective changes in the way the school tracks pupils' progress. It is now carefully checked to ensure that any that are in danger of slipping behind are quickly identified and given good support. Strategies to support pupils with moderate learning difficulties are very effective in accelerating their progress. Opportunities to evaluate learning and to work on individual targets provide very good guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. Her determination to improve the school's effectiveness is shared by all the staff and governors. There are good systems in place to check the quality of the school's provision and pupils' progress. The resulting accurate information is used well to evaluate performance and set future priorities. For example, evaluation showed a need to help pupils to become more independent and to have a much clearer view of how to improve. Hence a school-wide project was introduced which is impacting positively on learning: pupils are now clear about the next steps in their learning. The school has accurately evaluated what it needs to do to extend pupils' links and understanding of the community beyond the immediate locality. The school realises it has too few links with schools in other countries. Governance is good. Governors are supportive of the school and are aware of its strengths and hold the school to account effectively. However, they are aware that there is a need for them to be more directly involved in the monitoring process.

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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?	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?	2
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 is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
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 ¹ reached by learners	2
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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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

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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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



15 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Terling Church of England Primary School, Chelmsford CM3 2PN

I am writing to let you know what I found when I visited your school. Thank you for helping me so well and making me welcome. I really enjoyed your celebration assembly and was impressed with your singing – particularly when you sang Kumbaya with the ocarinas! I also thought the guitars were excellent. I can see why you enjoy school so much because I think yours is a good school. These are the things that I liked the most.

- You thoroughly enjoy school, behave exceptionally well and you want to do your best.
- The staff take extremely good care of you. They support you outstandingly well and those of you that don't find learning easy are given good support.
- The school makes sure that you are safe and very well looked after.
- You have a wide range of clubs to choose from and you take advantage of these very well.
- You know the importance of eating the right things and staying fit and healthy.
- Your teachers do a good job. Teaching is good and your lessons are made interesting for you.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job too. She is supported very well by all the other adults in the school.

All schools want to get better. To achieve this in your school, I have asked your teachers and governors to continue to focus on two particular things. The first is to make sure that more of you gain the higher level in writing at the end of Year 6. The second is about attendance. Even though most of you have high levels of attendance, some families take holidays during term time and so attendance levels are affected. Hence, your headteacher and governors need to find ways to reduce term time holidays.

You can help by making sure you work as hard as possible whilst continuing to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler
Lead inspector