

Tavistock Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113265
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	338131
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Rowena Onions

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 of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Parkes
Headteacher	Lynnette Selbie
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2007
School address	Plymouth Road Tavistock PL19 8BX
Telephone number	01822 616044
Fax number	01822 616062
Email address	head@tavistock-pri.devon.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Inspection number	338131

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty-one lessons were observed and fifteen teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data on pupils' progress, the school development plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, minutes of governing body meetings and a range of other documentation. One hundred and twenty responses to the parent and carer questionnaire were received.

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

- rates of pupils' progress throughout the school
- the impact of the school's leadership on improvement
- the usefulness and impact of assessment procedures
- the impact of the provision on the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

Most pupils are White British, with a small number of Asian or Asian British heritage who speak English as an additional language. Additionally, the school has a local authority resource base for pupils with communication and interactional difficulties and a Nursery Plus unit for young children who have special educational needs and/or difficulties. As a result, the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well above average. More pupils than average join year groups throughout the school during each academic year. There are two intakes into the Early Years Foundation Stage, at the beginning of the autumn and spring terms.

Since the last inspection, the school has seen a considerable number of staff changes and has had three acting headteachers. The current substantive headteacher has been in post for four terms.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Tavistock Primary provides a satisfactory education. Because of good leadership and management, it is rapidly improving after a period of instability when it was identified by the local authority as a school causing concern. Some aspects of the school's work are now good and others are poised to be so. Pupils' progress has accelerated and many now make good progress. However, taken as a whole, pupils' achievement is still now only satisfactory. Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage are more embedded and children in the Nursery and Reception classes now make good progress. Pupils with complex educational, physical and behavioural difficulties are particularly well supported and make consistently good progress towards their academic and personal targets.

Pupils like school. Teachers try hard to make lessons interesting by encouraging pupils to talk before they write and or to discuss with a partner their thinking in mathematics. Additionally, the good use of visits and visitors enables pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning. These good practices, together with new routines for maintaining discipline and good adult pupil relationships, mean that pupils behave much better than they are reported to have done two years ago. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and actively contributes to pupils' better progress. Pupils' increasing engagement with school is reflected in rising attendance, which is now above average. Pupils report feeling safe in school. Care, guidance and support are good and pupils say that they know they have someone to talk to if they have a problem.

Recently introduced initiatives to improve the impact of teaching are having a positive effect. Some initiatives are, however, better embedded than others. In some lessons, teachers are not sufficiently clear exactly what they want pupils of different ages and abilities to learn. This means that sometimes pupils sit listening to the teacher for too long, their ability to target their efforts is reduced and they are unable to assess what they have learned at the end of the lesson. It also means that the feedback they get, including marking, is not as focused as it might be. The school is correct that the curriculum needs to offer pupils more opportunities to practise what they have learned across subjects.

The continuing determination of the headteacher, governors and staff to improve the school is underpinned by rigorous checking of the quality of education. There is now a strong staff team pulling together to move the school forward. School self-evaluation is honest and generally accurate. This and the rapid improvements made over the last year demonstrate that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement. There have been attempts to involve parents and carers in helping the school to develop, but these have not been sufficient to allay the worries of a small but significant group of parents and carers which arose when the school was less stable. Although pupils make a sound contribution to the running of the school community on a day-to-day basis and play a

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

good part in the local community, they too are not as involved in helping the school to improve as they could be.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is all at least good by:
 - ensuring teachers are very clear about what they expect different groups of pupils to learn in each lesson
 - organising lessons to promote the learning of these different groups
 - making sure pupils know how to judge their own progress in lessons
 - ensuring feedback to pupils is linked with what they were expected to learn and shows clearly how they can improve their work.
- Develop the curriculum so pupils have good opportunities to practise what they have learned across subjects.
- Involve parents and carers and pupils in helping the school to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The attainment of Year 6 pupils is above average in both English and mathematics. This represents good progress as the attainment of this group of pupils was significantly below average at the end of Year 2. However, most of their progress has been made in Years 5 and 6 and pupils are still making better progress in some year groups and classes than in others. Pupils are generally keen to learn, for example they showed interest in their research into the Egyptians. They try hard to live up to expectations when they are clear what these are. Pupils with complex needs, including those placed in the school's special unit, have individual programmes of work that enable them to make good progress whether they are working within the unit or in mainstream classes. The progress of other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is, however, more variable, mirroring the progress of all pupils. Individualised support helps the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language to progress well.

Pupils are lively and active and understand how important healthy eating is to keeping themselves well. They understand the risks that they might face as they get older, such as those associated with drugs and alcohol. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, as demonstrated by their increasing ability to consider and support others. The school is successful in helping pupils with significant behavioural difficulties gradually learn to control their behaviour. Pupils have a secure understanding of cultures beyond their own experience and show respect for the different cultural heritages of their classmates. Average attainment in basic skills, including information and communication technology, means that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their futures.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are planned in sequences that allow pupils to build their skills systematically. The use of teaching assistants is good and plays a significant role in helping pupils make progress. Teachers' management of pupils is firm and consistent so lessons are conducted in an orderly way. There is now a termly programme of meetings in which teachers discuss the progress of each of their pupils with senior staff. Interventions are then made and pupil targets put in place so that teachers are well aware of the needs of each pupil and expectations are appropriately high. Assessment is used satisfactorily to ensure there is an appropriate level of challenge built into lesson activities. The care, guidance and support of pupils are given high priority and this is having an increasingly beneficial impact on pupils' outcomes, especially for those with more complex educational and emotional difficulties.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Over the time she has been in post, the headteacher has worked hard to stabilise the school and improve the education it provides. The last inspection identified a need to ensure that the school's leadership team worked together towards common goals and this has now been successfully achieved. Priorities for improvement have been accurately assessed and successfully incorporated in school development planning. Governors are active and supportive and, as they are given more information about pupils' progress, are becoming increasingly able to hold the school to account. They have supported the school's action to rectify prior underachievement by budgeting very carefully to support two smaller, single-age Year 5 and Year 6 classes that have helped pupils make up for lost time. This action to reduce differences in progress, together with the active and valuable support the school gives to pupils with complex needs and those from different backgrounds, is evidence of the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and its commitment to tackling discrimination. Safeguarding is given a high priority and all requirements are in place. Good links with other professionals have helped the school develop and are used particularly well to help the school support its more vulnerable pupils. The school also reaches out to others, for example providing guidance in the best ways to support pupils with complex needs in other schools. The school has taken good first steps towards the promotion of community cohesion in the school and in the local community and has good plans for the extension of this to the wider community nationally.

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

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
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities below those which are typical for their age. Despite the poor condition of the accommodation, provision is good, including that for the children who are placed at the school because they have significant special educational needs and/or difficulties. A well-planned, well-balanced curriculum means that children, whatever their level of need, progress well and learn to adapt to and enjoy school. Outdoor activities in the somewhat restricted space available are particularly popular. Both indoor and outdoor activities provide the children with good opportunities to learn through working directly with adults, to practise what they have learned and to follow their own interests. Good teaching is provided by teachers and teaching assistants. Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. For example, a nursery-age child fetched the paint she wanted to use, opened the bottles and tipped the required quantities into a palette. This independence prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Good leadership and management have meant that the provision continues to improve, as does the children's achievement. By the time they complete their Reception year, children have gained the skills and knowledge expected for their age.

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

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

Most parents and carers are supportive of most aspects of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children like school and that it keeps them safe. Most parents and carers think the school is well led and managed. Inspectors agree with these opinions. Inspectors looked closely at the concerns raised by some parents and carers about behaviour. They saw good behaviour on the part of the vast majority and this was corroborated by the school's own monitoring. However, inspectors judge that the school has not yet done enough to show parents and carers the improvements it has made in managing pupils' behaviour. The school has sought the views of parents and carers in a questionnaire and by adopting an 'open door' policy, but acknowledges that involving parents and carers more, including asking them what help they would like to assist them support their children at home, is an area for development. Inspectors judged that parents and carers are given appropriate information about children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tavistock Community Primary 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 345 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	53	46	38	10	8	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	61	51	58	40	9	8	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	41	52	43	13	11	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	41	56	47	8	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	61	51	46	38	9	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	37	52	43	20	17	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	43	55	46	12	10	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)	46	38	55	46	14	12	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	40	54	45	13	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	38	43	36	15	13	10	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	34	54	45	12	10	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	57	48	49	41	12	10	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	49	43	36	13	11	2	2

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tavistock Community Primary School, Tavistock PL19 8BX

We really enjoyed our time at your school and would like to thank you for your help and friendly conversations. You will be pleased to know that we judge Tavistock Primary to be a satisfactory school that is improving all the time.

Among the things we liked were:

- your increasingly good progress
- the good start you are given in the Nursery and Reception classes
- the fact that you get on well together and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe
- the way those of you with the greatest personal or learning difficulties are helped to make good progress
- that your teachers try to make your work interesting
- the care adults take to make you feel safe and happy
- the way your headteacher, teachers and governors are working together to make your school an even better place.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure you know exactly what you are aiming to learn in each lesson and that marking shows you where you have done well and how you could have made your work even better.
- Make sure you have more opportunity to practise what you have learned in one subject when you are working in others.
- Involve you and your parents and carers more in helping to improve your school. Through your school council, you can really help!

We are very glad that you like your school and know you will continue to do so.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.