

Whipton Barton Infants and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113092
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357259
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Fox
Headteacher	Joanne Davis
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 22 lessons involving 17 teachers, spoke to parents and carers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and staff. They observed the school's work, looked at local authority and School Improvement Partner reports, school policies, assessment and pupil tracking data, development plans and 41 parent and carer questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The current progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, particularly of more-able pupils.
- The current attendance levels of different groups of pupils.
- The quality of teaching and assessment, and its impact on securing higher levels of attainment and raising achievement.
- The effectiveness of subject leaders and their contributions to improving pupils' progress and attainment in all subjects.
- The effectiveness of the school's leadership and management in improving the quality of teaching and learning, and in raising pupils' attainment and achievement through their monitoring and development planning.

Information about the school

This is a large infant and nursery school and serves the local community within the Whipton area of Exeter. The nursery provides part-time places. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A very large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although fewer pupils than average have a statement of special educational needs. These pupils' needs mainly involve behavioural and speech, language and communication difficulties.

Since the previous inspection, the school has had a change of headteacher and assistant headteacher.

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

3

Main findings

The new headteacher provides a strong lead. She has acted quickly to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and evaluate the school's performance. Senior leaders have introduced an electronic system to record pupils' progress and identify any variations. These procedures have provided an honest and accurate appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This self-evaluation has been used effectively to inform the school improvement plan, prioritise key areas and identify an appropriate range of actions. Subject leaders have responded positively and have been encouraged to produce plans for their curriculum areas based on analysis of pupils' previous achievements. However, these action plans lack clear and measurable targets based on their intended impact on pupils' progress. The capacity of the school to improve is satisfactory because senior leaders, governors and subject leaders are developing their roles and responsibilities. Many of the planned actions and innovations are too recent to have brought about improvements to teaching and learning and raise pupils' achievement.

Children settle quickly into the life and routines of the school from an early age because staff provide a welcoming and supportive environment from the moment they arrive. This ensures that children are kept safe and their welfare maintained. Across the whole school, children respond with good behaviour, cooperate with each other and listen well. Systems to observe and assess children's progress in their first years vary and, as a result, activities do not cater fully for the needs of children of different abilities. These variations in practice also prevent senior leaders having a clear and accurate picture of children's attainment on entry into Nursery and Reception. Overall, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress from their starting points on entry into Nursery. Their speaking and early language skills are less well developed by the time they leave Reception and enter Year 1. This is because opportunities are missed to provide activities routinely which stimulate children's speaking and listening and their imaginative play. ♦

Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics across Years 1 and 2, although fewer than expected are currently in line to attain higher Level 3 results this year. Achievement in writing is improving and an increasing proportion of pupils are making satisfactory or better progress. However, currently, and over the last three years, too few pupils attain the highest standards in writing. Progress in reading varies because assessments are not used consistently across Years 1 and 2 to build on previous learning and accelerate the progress of all groups of pupils.

Teaching across the school is satisfactory overall. Monitoring of teaching and learning has provided teachers with clear guidance on how to improve their practice. Occasionally, the school's evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning do not place sufficient emphasis on the progress made by all groups of learners. Where teaching and learning are good, lessons are well organised, often lively and engaging, and proceed at a good

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pace. However, this is not always the case; at times, teachers spend too much time directing pupils and do not provide sufficient opportunities for more-able pupils to work independently. Teachers communicate their expectations to pupils and regularly share their objectives of the lesson. However, these do not consistently include clear messages to ensure that more-able pupils make the progress that they are capable of.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to consistently good, and raise pupils' attainment and progress, especially in reading, by:
 - improving the use of assessments to set clear learning objectives for all groups of pupils
 - ensuring all lessons maintain good pace and little time is wasted
 - focusing the monitoring of teaching and learning on its impact on pupils' learning.
- Evaluate more effectively the impact of the school's improvement plans by:
 - gathering accurate data of children's starting points on entry to the school
 - including quantifiable measures of pupils' progress.
- Improve children's progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing the use of observations and assessments to ensure that learning experiences match the range of abilities and build on children's learning
 - developing a more challenging and stimulating learning environment that promotes children's imagination and language and speaking skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The school's latest assessments, and confirmed in classroom observations, show pupils' progress across the school is satisfactory overall. In mathematics, pupils are making expected progress across Years 1 and 2. Progress in writing is improving and the vast majority of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress, and some, good. In reading, while a number of pupils make good progress, a significant proportion are making less progress than expected. Similarly, the proportion of pupils attaining higher Level 3 results in all subjects is fewer than expected, especially in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress across the school. The early identification of children's needs and the effective deployment of individual teaching assistants help to provide appropriate support. The swift involvement of specialist agencies to provide additional support ensures that children's varying educational and emotional needs are met.

Pupils clearly enjoy school, speak proudly of it and are positive about the support and kindness shown by staff. Parents and carers and pupils feel that staff are approachable, listen and take notice of their concerns, and this helps pupils to feel safe and cared for. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and they are polite and respectful to adults and to each other. They willingly carry out small tasks and make a good

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contribution to the friendly environment. A good example of this occurred when children were quick to spot a pupil standing alone and asked them to join in their games. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and the school has worked robustly with outside agencies to reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and understand the importance of healthy exercise and eating. Children from an early age understand the need to wash hands and maintain good levels of hygiene. While pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and make good progress in their social development, their spiritual and cultural understanding is less well developed.

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	2
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	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall with some good practice. Staff build good relationships with pupils and show good levels of care and consideration. This encourages pupils to be attentive in lessons and work cooperatively together. Teachers have developed their planning so that they more consistently share with pupils their expectations of a good piece of work. In the better lessons, pupils of all abilities are clear about the required learning and how to produce a good piece of work. Occasionally, too much time is spent explaining the activity and explanations are unclear, preventing pupils from working independently, especially more-able pupils. Marking is consistent

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across the school and used effectively to recognise pupils' achievements, and is beginning to identify pupils' next steps and the improvements that they can make in their work.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and helps them to develop their basic skills satisfactorily. It is adapted appropriately to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is developing opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. Staff provide a range of opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills through drama and partner work and, in turn, this helps to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils' scientific understanding and creative work are enhanced by opportunities to work outside of the classroom. They spoke enthusiastically about the musical instruments they had designed and made for the outdoor areas.

Senior staff liaise effectively with pre-school settings to ensure that children's needs are identified before they arrive at the school. Well-organised arrangements draw on the support and expertise of a range of outside professional agencies and contribute to pupils' good personal development. There are effective systems in place to monitor the support provided for, and the progress of, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants supporting pupils with a statement of special educational needs receive appropriate training to undertake their specific roles. Their support is tailored to ensure that pupils develop their independence and personal responsibility. The school has reduced the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school through partnerships with education welfare officers, a vigilant approach to pupils' attendance and by issuing penalties to parents and carers.

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?

Conducted primarily by the headteacher, a well-organised range of monitoring procedures has accurately identified the strengths of the school and areas for development. Within a short space of time, these procedures have produced an honest and accurate self-evaluation of the school's performance and led to the composition of a development plan aimed at addressing key priority areas. Staff are supportive of the school's approach and subject leaders have responded positively to opportunities to become more actively involved in planning improvements. These plans are too recent to have had a sustained impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising pupils' achievement across the school. However, the school's newly developed senior leadership team is strongly motivated to seek further improvement.

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Leaders and managers have worked actively to ensure an inclusive and supportive environment and are developing links beyond the school to further promote community cohesion. The school draws on partnerships with other agencies effectively to help to promote good personal development and emotional well-being in all groups of pupils. It tackles discrimination issues well and the majority of pupils enjoy equal opportunities to succeed, although the school is aware that too few more-able pupils attain the highest standards. Up-to-date training and clear guidance provide all staff and visitors with a clear understanding of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Key staff initiate contact with family support services and the local children's centre to improve the safety of potentially vulnerable pupils so that safeguarding procedures are secure and consistently followed. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school. They appreciate the newly introduced daily opportunities in every classroom to engage in purposeful learning activities alongside their children.

With local authority support, the governing body is developing an increased awareness of its roles and responsibilities but is not yet involved in closely monitoring the impact of the school's action plans. Staff report that governors are supportive, are more regularly in contact with the school, and gaining in experience.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

On entry to Nursery, some children have weak speaking and listening skills and are at early stages of their emotional development. Many children start Reception slightly below expectations across all areas of the curriculum. From these starting points, children make satisfactory progress overall across the Nursery and Reception classes, although their early reading and writing skills remain less well developed. Staff provide sensitive support and a well-organised introduction into the setting so that children settle and quickly develop

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their self-confidence and social skills. Children behave well and generally listen attentively to each other and to adults.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by well-trained and experienced staff, and through the swift involvement of other professional agencies. The good level of care and guidance is apparent, most visibly in the planned liaison between lunchtime supervisors and classroom support staff for children most in need of additional support. This teamwork ensures that all children are keen to take on small jobs and responsibilities around the classrooms and in helping to organise snack and lunchtime routines. Planning of activities is developing links across curriculum areas so that children reading traditional stories are encouraged to produce small clay pots, play with porridge flakes and write simple recipes. However, the quality and range of activities across the Early Years Foundation Stage do not consistently engage children's imaginations and stimulate their speaking and language skills.

Through a range of monitoring activities, the headteacher has been proactive in working with leaders to quickly identify areas for development. With the support of the local authority, children are now provided with increased opportunities to develop their independence. Leaders and managers are beginning to assemble existing assessment information to provide a clearer picture of children's progress. Until now, information on children's attainment on entry into the Nursery has been patchy and not gathered effectively.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are positive about the school and are happy about their children's experiences at school. Almost all recognise that the school and staff place a high priority on ensuring that their child is safe. They recognise the part played by the school to encourage pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. The vast majority report that the school helps them to support their children's learning and many spoke positively about the new initiative at the start of the school day where they can visit classrooms and work alongside their children. Most parents and carers feel that the school is well led and managed, and inspectors agree that the new headteacher had been quick to identify the school's particular strengths and draw up plans to improve the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 292 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	63	14	34	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	59	14	34	2	5	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	56	16	39	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	59	13	32	3	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	56	17	41	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	51	18	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	44	21	51	1	2	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)	15	37	20	49	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	41	21	51	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	46	18	44	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	41	20	49	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	56	15	37	3	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	63	14	34	0	0	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



1 April 2011

Dear Children



Inspection of Whipton Barton Infants and Nursery School Exeter EX1 3JP

Thank you to all those of you who made us feel so welcome when we visited. We noticed how kind and considerate you were to each other and to adults. You clearly enjoy school and all that it has to offer. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and we noticed how you help to make the school a friendly and enjoyable place to spend time in. Staff in the school listen to you and take time to make sure you are safe and well looked after. In lessons, teachers and support staff help you to learn and develop your skills. Those of you who need additional help are provided with good help and support from a wide range of adults. They help you to develop your behaviour, concentrate and to become more confident and independent in your learning.

You pay attention in lessons and enjoy chances to work together and to take part in drama lessons. You make good progress where lessons are planned carefully and you are helped to get to work quickly and confidently. We have asked teachers to make sure that the pupils get to work quickly. If you find work too easy, we have asked teachers to give you different work so that you are encouraged to do your best. We have asked the school staff and the governing body to check more carefully if these plans are helping to improve the school. Your new headteacher has quickly got to know the school. She has looked closely at your work and the progress that you are making in lessons. With other staff in the school, she has produced a plan that aims to improve a number of areas of the school.

Children who are in the Nursery and Reception classes also enjoy coming to school. We saw how much they enjoyed the chance to learn and play with porridge and make clay pots. We have asked teachers in these classes to provide more of these activities every day.

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield

Her Majesty's Inspector

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