

Tavistock Community Primary School

Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 8BX

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of most pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and those attracting the pupil premium, is good overall. The rate of progress in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 has improved rapidly since the last inspection.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage staff ensure that children make good progress from their starting points and start Key Stage 1 at the levels expected for their stage of development.
- Pupils attending the specialist additional provision for those with communication and interaction difficulties make outstanding progress. So do those who are part of the outreach nursery provision.
- Teaching is good as demanding tasks interest pupils. Marking is used especially well to show them how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, which helps pupils to learn, and they have a good understanding of keeping themselves and each other safe and free from bullying. Attendance is above the average for primary schools.
- There is a strong leadership team, led by a very effective headteacher and supported by a knowledgeable governing body. Together, they have ensured that all teachers are accountable for the progress of their pupils and have driven the improvements in achievement.
- Performance management of staff by the headteacher and governors has improved the quality of teaching which is now good across the school and outstanding in some cases.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all pupils are taught to read and write letters and their sounds well enough to ensure they read and write confidently by the end of Year 2.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to enrich the curriculum by drawing more explicitly on pupils' interests across a range of subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day’s notice by three additional inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- They held meetings with staff, including the headteacher, and representatives of the governing body. In addition, they took account of the views of staff expressed in the 49 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils at different times during the school day, and looked at the work in their books. They listened to pupils read from Years 2, 3 and 4.
- The views of parents, expressed in the 30 responses to Parent View and one letter received, were taken into consideration.
- School documentation was examined, including the school’s own data on the progress of pupils in each year group, behaviour and attendance records, and documentation and procedures relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Sadler

Additional Inspector

Paul Rushforth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Tavistock Community Primary School is a larger-than-average primary school, with a maintained nursery.
- The school has additional resource provision for pupils with communication and interaction difficulties, as well as an outreach nursery provision which supports children with additional needs who attend local pre-schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than the national average, whilst the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is higher than the average.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national average.
- The school meets government floor standards, which are the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up the rate at which pupils at Key Stage 1 acquire reading and writing skills by:
 - improving the way letters and their sounds are taught so that pupils have the opportunity to use them in context, learn them thoroughly and, therefore, not lose time revising previously taught sounds
 - ensuring that the progress of pupils in learning letters and sounds is checked often so that pupils move on to learning the next sound as soon as they are ready.
- Enrich the curriculum and learning environment by:
 - involving the pupils in deciding what they would like to learn within their topics
 - linking new learning very clearly to what pupils know already
 - making better use of new technology to make learning as enjoyable as possible
 - using displays of pupils' work throughout the school to celebrate success, inspire learning and raise pupils' aspirations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children show varying levels of development but, overall, their skills are below those expected for their age, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, and in their speaking and listening skills. Due to good-quality provision and teaching, including additional support for children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, pupils make good progress and enter Key Stage 1 having met many of their early learning goals.
- Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1, building upon their earlier learning. Support is continued to potentially vulnerable pupils to help them overcome personal, social or emotional problems so that they can enjoy learning. However, weaknesses in the teaching of letters and sounds lead to slower progress in learning to read than in other areas of learning. These weaknesses are rectified by the end of Year 6, by which time standards of reading are above average.
- Pupils enjoy reading and discussing their reading books. Older pupils read confidently and make good use of punctuation to help them read with expression. Occasionally, pupils cannot read fluently because they are unable to blend sounds confidently to read unknown words. Staff are skilled at questioning pupils to help them understand what they read and this encouragement leads to enjoyment of books.
- The progress of different groups of pupils is good, with those entitled to pupil premium support, those with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs or disabilities, making similar progress to their peers. As a result, the gap in achievement between groups is closing.
- Pupils taught in the autistic spectrum resource make outstanding progress because the work is exceptionally well matched to meet their individual needs.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is good and, as a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are at least average or better.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, where pupils were solving problems relating to the properties of shapes, more-able pupils were asked to devise their own problems and write the clues. Pupils showed great enjoyment and perseverance in this work and did not want the lesson to end when it was playtime. An outstanding lesson in Year 3 gave pupils demanding work which, together with high expectations by the teacher, resulted in excellent progress made by pupils in their understanding and use of grammar.
- Much of the teaching is lively, with many lessons involving pupils working in partnership to solve problems, which generates high-quality talk and a good level of pupil interest. Examples of this were seen in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were asked to select their own resources and way of recording children's bowling scores ready to make a presentation to their class. On occasion, however, where teachers do not make learning exciting enough, pupils tend to lose interest.
- Pupils enjoy the visits which enrich the curriculum. Pupils reported that they loved the trip to Morwellham Quay because as they said, 'We got to go on the mine train twice!'
- Marking in pupils' books makes a strong contribution to their good progress because it tells pupils what they have done well and gives them guidance on how to improve. The presentation of work in pupils' books is not always of a good enough quality.
- Pupils are regularly encouraged to discuss their ideas during lesson with the adults as well as with classmates. They mark their own work in order to tell teachers if they understand what they were expected to learn.
- Teachers plan work well for the needs of different abilities within their class, and plan support

for those pupils who need it, such as the work by a skilled teaching assistant in a Year 1 lesson who helped lower-ability pupils find patterns in subtraction.

- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) is not always brisk enough to maintain pupils' interest. Sounds taught are not reinforced during lessons by pupils either reading them in full sentences or writing them in a meaningful context. This means that time is often spent revising sounds rather than moving on at a quick pace to learn and use new sounds.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because teachers create a secure learning environment, with a range of inviting activities which quickly attract the children's interest. Children respond well to the good routines and caring approach of staff. Parents contribute to good learning by bringing in examples of work their child has done at home to go into their children's books.
- The teaching in the additional resource base for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is outstanding, with activities adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils. As a result, the pupils remain completely engaged with their work, use information and communication technology competently, such as to research information on unusual animals, and meet the teacher's high expectations for their behaviour.
- There are some very good displays in classrooms which help stimulate pupils' learning and provide sources of help. However, some displays do not show pupils that their work is valued. This is particularly the case in the corridors, where there is little that shows a 'wow' factor and celebrates the work of pupils.
- In many lessons, teaching assistants provide skilful support for pupils to keep them focused on the task and help them make progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The headteacher and staff have brought about considerable improvements in behaviour since the last inspection, as shown by the school's behaviour records, due to the consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policy. The number of exclusions has dropped to well below the national average.
- Pupils enjoy earning 'green time', which is their reward at the end of each week for consistently good behaviour. Within lessons, teachers build pupils' self-esteem through appropriate use of praise. Pupils are well behaved and have a positive attitude to learning. Very rarely, a small number of pupils show signs of boredom when they are not interested in what they are learning.
- During playtimes, and when moving around the school, pupils show respect and consideration for each other and for adults. There is a good number of adults to supervise playtimes, which helps pupils to play together and to stay safe. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Parents responding to Parent View believe that behaviour in school is good and endorse the inspectors' view that there is very little bullying. Pupils do understand about different types of bullying and report that, if any should occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively by the school.
- The school's strong promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in pupils' good behaviour, thoughtfulness towards others and the school's links with local churches.
- Attendance of pupils, including those classed as persistent absentees, is checked very closely and the school has worked with parents to improve attendance, which is now above average. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and like coming to school. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

The leadership and management are good

- The very effective headteacher has established a good team of leaders and governors who are committed to improving the achievement of all pupils. They have successfully shared this ethos

with all members of staff, in a culture of openness and sharing of good ideas.

- Improvements since the last inspection provide evidence of this good leadership, for example improving the quality of teaching so that it has raised the rate of progress of pupils and resulted in higher standards in national tests in English and mathematics over the last two years.
 - New systems for checking the school's work, such as the introduction of middle leaders to analyse pupils' progress in literacy and mathematics, have helped improvements.
 - The leadership team has rightly ensured that all teachers use assessment information and data to plan accurately what they are going to teach their pupils next. Teachers present information on their pupils' progress to regular meetings of the senior leadership team, and are accountable for progress.
 - Performance management of staff is used to develop their skills, and teachers who discussed this with inspectors said that the process is rigorous and helps them improve the quality of their teaching.
 - Parents responding to Parent View, and staff who completed the staff questionnaire, believe that the school is led and managed well. Leaders have taken action to involve parents more fully in their children's education, such as providing 'stay and play' workshops to help parents understand how staff teach the children their letters and sounds and mathematics.
 - The culture in school is one where everyone is valued equally, and discrimination of any type is not tolerated.
 - The support provided by the local authority to assist senior staff to check the work of the school has reduced due to the improvements which have been made.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is good
 - has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has supported the headteacher in taking steps to improve the school
 - checks up regularly on the effectiveness of the school's policies, for example in supporting the strong action taken by the headteacher since the last inspection to improve behaviour across the school
 - monitors that the performance management systems in school relate closely to the required improvements which are identified by the school's checking of its own performance, including lesson observations and pupil progress information
 - uses the pupil premium funding to reduce class sizes so that more attention is given to teaching the pupils for whom it is intended and has ensured that any gaps in attainment are eliminated
 - manages the budget well
 - fulfils the statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113265
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	401352
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Parkes
Headteacher	Lynnette Selbie
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2010
Telephone number	01822 616044
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