

Highweek Community Primary and Nursery School

Coronation Road, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 1TX

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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 school is rapidly improving as a result of the focus by senior leaders on accelerating pupils' achievement and improving the quality of teaching.
- Children get off to an exceptionally good start in the Nursery and Reception classes because of the stimulating learning environment and imaginative teaching.
- Pupils make good progress as they move throughout the school. Their attitudes to learning are particularly strong.
- Pupils' attainment has risen in reading and mathematics. Focused work is also leading to improvements in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and at times rapid progress.
- The quality of teaching is generally good, and some is outstanding. Teachers are developing their skills well to ensure pupils receive the best teaching methods.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. Parents and carers agree. There is a culture of mutual respect and tolerance between staff and pupils.
- The school is a welcoming place to all visitors, and provides an attractive, safe and secure environment for pupils to thrive personally, socially and academically.
- The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has secured the confidence of parents, pupils and staff by improving the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' writing is not as good as their reading and mathematics skills.
- Pupils are not always actively encouraged to lead their own learning and the more-able pupils do not always get work that challenges them enough.
- Governors are insufficiently active in supporting senior leaders to secure further improvements to the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which 16 were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed teaching assistants working with small groups. They looked at a wide sample of work completed by pupils. They also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and senior and middle leaders. They spoke with the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at school planning, monitoring and evaluation documents, including the school's own data and analysis of pupils' progress from when they joined the school, performance management information, safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the online Parent View survey and one written communication from a parent. They also met with some parents.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Delbridge-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Liz Townend	Additional Inspector
Richard Chalkley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Highweek is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for looked after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of services families, is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides an after-school club which is managed by the governing body.
- The Headteacher took up her appointment in September 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise teaching and learning to the highest levels by:
 - making sure lessons routinely provide pupils, particularly the more able, with tasks that are appropriately demanding and that recognise their different starting points
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills, particularly through a more creative and innovative curriculum which reflects their interests and skills
 - giving pupils a greater role in leading their own learning and that of others
 - sharing examples of the most effective teaching so that staff can enhance their own practice.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - taking a more central role in supporting school leaders to improve the quality of teaching further and in monitoring their impact in raising pupils' attainment
 - providing parents with more opportunities to engage purposefully in supporting their children's learning, as well as participating in the wider activities of the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage skills and experiences that are well below those typically found for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their numeracy and problem-solving skills. They make good progress and an increasing number achieve the expected early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1
- Good progress throughout Key Stage 1 ensures that by the end of Year 2, pupils are meeting national expectations in reading and mathematics, but do not do as well in their writing because of their weaker speech and language skills. Their skills in linking the sounds that letters make (phonics) as part of early reading are developing well.
- Following a period of underachievement, pupils are now making faster progress across the school, but they have not been able to reach the higher levels at the end of Year 6, particularly in their writing. Attainment at the end of Year 6 rose in 2012 and was better than in previous years. The school's data and pupils' work show that pupils are on track to do better in 2013 and beyond.
- The school is using data on pupils' progress to set more aspirational and individualised targets. It is also focusing more sharply on making sure that rates of progress continue to rise across the school, and particularly throughout Key Stage 2.
- Leaders have identified writing as a whole-school focus for boosting achievement further, because they recognise its importance in helping pupils to attain the higher levels.
- Pupils benefit from extra support in and out of lessons. Teaching assistants provide well-planned sessions for individuals and groups of pupils who need more time to learn.
- The school is successfully closing the gaps in attainment of different groups of pupils, and narrowing them in relation to the performance of other pupils nationally, particularly for pupils who attract the additional pupil premium funding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the additional support they receive so that they do at least as well as similar pupils by Year 6.
- An analysis of the school's data confirms that there are no significant differences in achievement between any groups of pupils. Occasionally, the more-able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because activities sometimes lack challenge for these pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils feel they are taught well, and parents agree. Teaching is generally good, with some examples of outstanding practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the teaching of phonics. In a few lessons, activities are not always tightly matched to pupils' individual learning needs to ensure they reach their highest levels. Opportunities are sometimes missed to allow pupils to demonstrate what they know and have learned, particularly by girls where there are a higher number of boys in the class.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Excellent coordination of resources and activities to support their learning means they are well supported in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants usually provide a good level of support, but do not always skilfully question pupils to test and deepen their understanding of what they know and can do.
- Teachers plan carefully to ensure that speaking and listening skills are a strong feature of many lessons, and the pupils are confident in explaining their ideas to 'learning partners'. Good use of interactive whiteboards supports the learning of vocabulary, and helps to bring learning alive. This was seen in a Year 4 literacy lesson when pupils developed their understanding and use of

suffixes before drafting and performing their own drama sequence after watching a film clip from 'The lion, the witch and the wardrobe'.

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their extended writing skills and to practise routinely their technical accuracy, particularly when constructing extended pieces of writing. This prevents them from making the good progress in writing that they make in reading and mathematics to achieve higher levels.
- Lessons are carefully structured to provide a variety of activities and challenges for pupils to demonstrate their 'steps to success'. This highly successful strategy is building pupils' learning power and confidence.
- Extensive use of high quality information and communication technology is used routinely and successfully to provide pupils with a range of opportunities to practise their skills. However, teaching does not always promote pupils' active role in leading their own learning and that of others, with too few opportunities for pupils to work in teams and develop their leadership roles.
- Occasionally, teachers plan lessons that do not always recognise the different abilities and starting points that pupils have and are given the same tasks. This affects the more-able pupils, in particular, who would benefit from a greater level of challenge.
- Marking throughout the school ensures pupils are informed about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, which is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to assess whether they are improving because they do not always use success criteria, or to review their own work and compare it with others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and life at school. Firmly established classroom routines promote pupils' engagement in learning very effectively. The school is a harmonious, inclusive and welcoming place.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons and when they move around the school. Low-level disruption is uncommon and occurs on the rare occasions when work does not fully engage pupils. For the few who find it difficult to conform to the school's high expectations, the school makes good use of external agencies.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know how to stay safe, particularly when using the internet and other social networking technologies. They also have a well developed understanding about different types of bullying, and sensitively understand each other's different opinions, choices and values. They say bullying is rare, and adults are on hand to sort out minor disagreements that arise occasionally.
- Pupils routinely demonstrate their respect for each other and adults, and the school provides regular opportunities for them to develop their social and moral skills as well as their spirituality. Less well developed is pupils' knowledge and first-hand experience of people from different cultures and communities in the local area and across Britain, so they do not yet fully understand their roles and responsibilities as members of a multicultural Britain.
- Older pupils, in the role of Pupil Advocates, enjoy using their leadership skills to help other pupils play and learn safely at lunchtimes. They are ambitious and keen to extend and develop their roles further to help manage and lead other pupils in their learning and play.
- The inspection endorsed the views of the large majority of parents who believe that behaviour is usually good and that their children feel safe in school. Parents and pupils are highly confident that any concerns they have are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills in a safe and stimulating environment both at the beginning and end of the school day with the breakfast and after-school clubs.

- Attendance is average and improving. This is due to a consistent and relentless approach by staff in tackling persistent absence.

The leadership and management are good

- The highly skilled and experienced headteacher has brought a new vision, energy and determination to establish successfully a stable and cohesive community school, which is now firmly set on continually improving pupils' educational experiences. Leaders and managers have correctly focused on improving the quality of teaching throughout the school, and as a result, pupils' achievement is set to improve further. The school has benefitted from working in partnership with teachers and leaders from a school in London.
- Rapid actions have been taken to improve the quality of the learning environment, and the school now provides a highly attractive, cohesive and nurturing place for pupils to thrive. Aspirational targets have been set for all pupils to achieve a minimum expected and 'non-negotiable' level of progress in every subject and in every class to address previous shortcomings.
- Rigorous systems for checking the quality of teaching and leadership ensures there is now tighter accountability for every member of staff. Teachers and leaders are set demanding performance and appraisal targets, which are now beginning to contribute directly to the school's improvement priorities.
- New systems and processes for routinely tracking and monitoring individual pupils' progress have been introduced. They are now showing signs of contributing to the acceleration of pupils' achievement because teachers are clearer about what their pupils are capable of and what they should achieve.
- Changes to the curriculum are now in train to bring about more innovative approaches to teaching and learning. These changes are planned to help pupils build and develop further their skills for learning and for life through building further on the excellent partnerships with other schools, businesses and community groups.
- Governors, staff, parents and pupils are highly confident and complimentary about what the headteacher has done to improve the school.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support to the school, as a result of the rapid improvements secured by the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know what is happening in the school and have an accurate view of what still needs to be done to further improve the school so that it can be outstanding. They know about the quality of teaching and where there is stronger teaching, including the progress of teachers through the pay scales. They accurately account for the performance of pupils in relation to other pupils and other schools nationally. They demonstrate a good knowledge of the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, and recognise the positive impact this is having on the pupils who attract the funding. However, governors agree they have not always in the past checked that leaders and managers have performed their duties effectively. They recognise they need further training in order to strengthen their roles and provide stronger governance, particularly in working with parents to develop their involvement in the education of their children.

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	113210
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	405456

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	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Payne
Headteacher	Judith Martyn
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 January 2011
Telephone number	01626 216300
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